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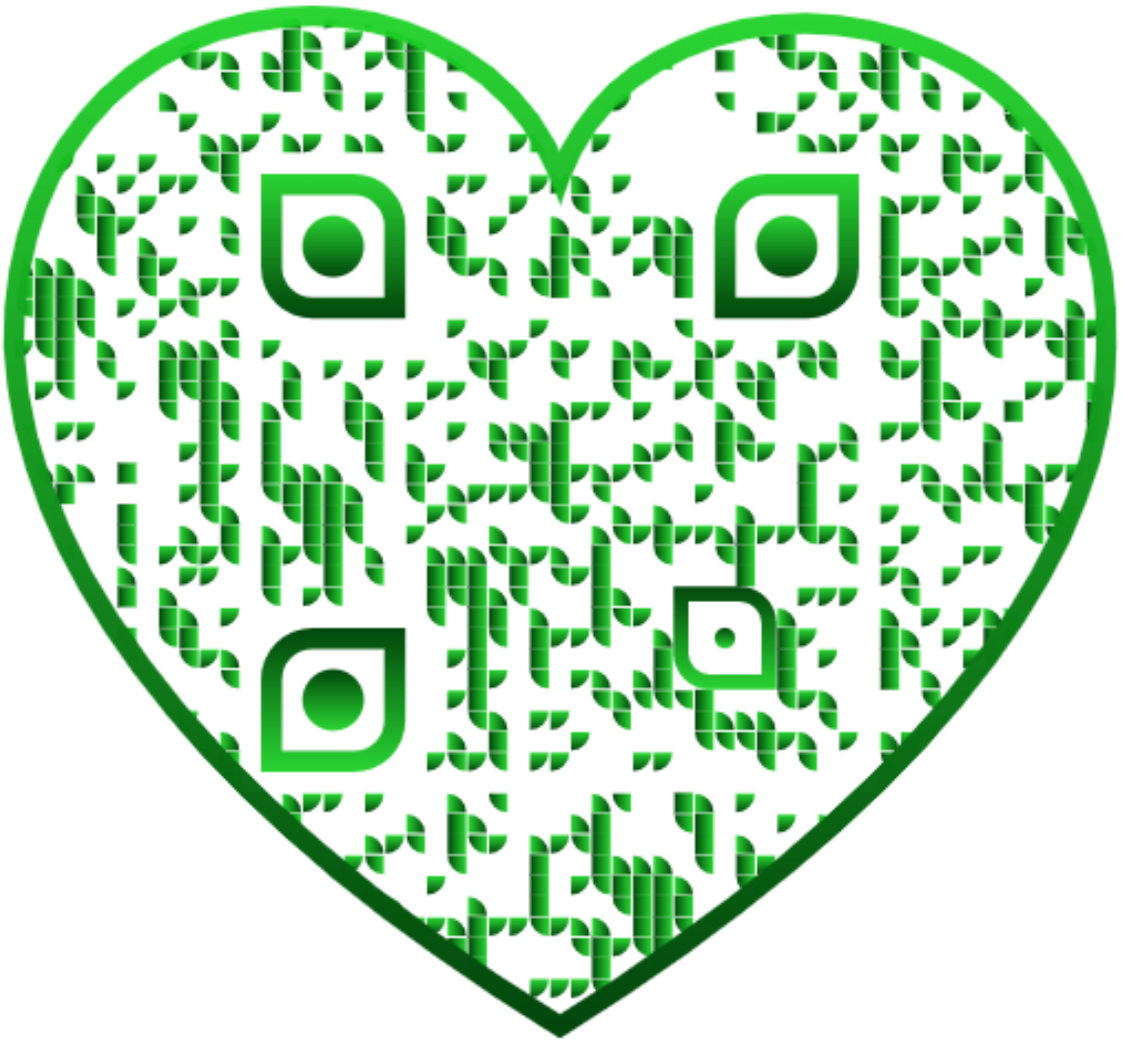

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Howdy Shindiggers,

We are now roughy 60 years on from The Beatles and Stones changing the world. The subsequent 50ths, 40ths, 30ths, even 20ths, all now bare varying degrees of nostalgia, and vintage charm. There's a lot of music behind us. Upcoming returns from The Prisoners and The Soundtrack Of Our Lives are eagerly awaited by all at *Shindig!* Yet artists like The Lemon Twigs and Daniel Romano's Outfit continue to record incredible music, as good as anything from the annals of rock history. Sure, like nearly all of the current artists that tick our boxes, the "past" is referenced, but the finest acts bring something of their own to the proceedings, keeping rock 'n' roll alive and fresh.

This magazine celebrates the "then" and the "now" equally, and the collector and fan has never had it better. There's a wealth of recordings to look back on and enjoy, and contemporary artists continue to offer their take on the many forms of music that thrill us, melding them together, often creating something highly original.

As Modstock approaches (see our interview about the event on page10) we decided that going all art-pop was very timely. Terry Nolder remembers a couple of magic years fronting The Eyes in the '60s, during the time when Ealing was alight with creativity and a forward-thinking attitude. Elsewhere we voyage to Korea for an appreciation of '70s band Sanullim, talk with rock 'n' roll photographer David Arnoff, hear about Spirit's *Twelve Dreams Of Dr Sardonicus* in the band's own words, and chronicle French legend Michel Polnareff's glory days – and that's just scratching the surface.

It fills us with joy to read messages about how much you lot loved our output in 2023. Here's to the fact-filled, open, and daring year that lays ahead. Do subscribe if you are yet to do so.

See you next month,

Jon 'Mojo' Mills,
Editor-In-Chief

Shindig! recommend using the hi-fi gear of their media partners and sponsors. Left to right: Pro-Ject X2 turntable (bit.ly/3FzsvhV), Cambridge Audio EVO 150 (bit.ly/3qEUusx), EVO CD (bit.ly/462l6mz), and JBL L82s (bit.ly/3X7m3XA). This is a supreme hassle-free system for vinyl, CD, high-res streaming. We will be working very closely with Cambridge Audio moving forward, so watch this space. We use Chord cables (bit.ly/3sbhbp7)

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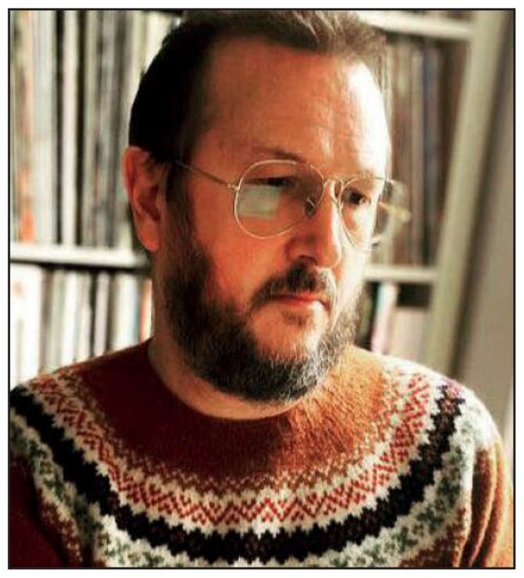

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Garage fan? An anthology of all the recordings our own Jon 'Mojo' Mills made with The Nuthins in the '90s is out now on Detour. Head to bit.ly/46QhB2M to order, adding "from *Shindig!*"

New releases: February 2024

Fantastic Voyage: New Sounds For The European Canon 1977-1981

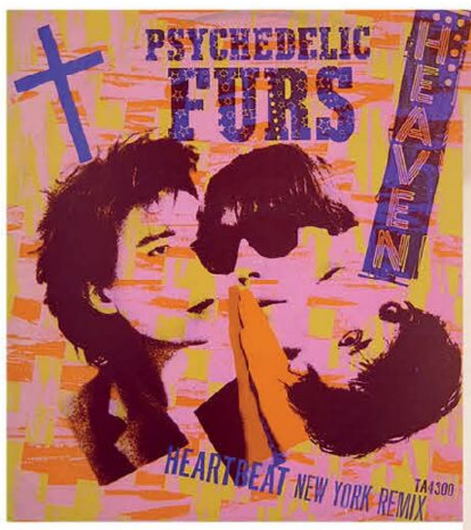
CDCHD 1630/ XXQLP2 124 (2LP)

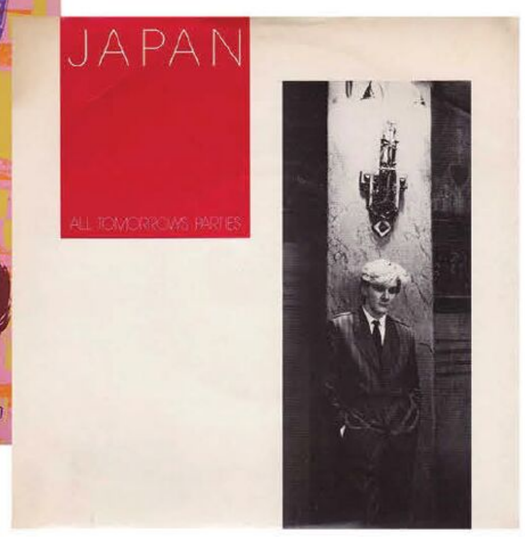
"Fantastic Voyage" takes its name from a track on David Bowie's "Lodger" album. Here we find music from the borderlands of the 70s and 80s, from artists that Bowie was influenced by – Robert Fripp, Scott Walker – and also from newer acts that he had influenced… who in turn would inspire him. The records come from Germany, Japan, France, the US and the post-punk UK, all linked by their kinship with Bowie's "Lodger" and "Scary Monsters" albums.

Jon Savage's 1983-1985 Welcome To Techno City

CDTOP2 1639

A multi-genre collection to reflect Jon Savage's mid-80s listening: a mix of indie rock, synthetic pop, electro, hip hop, soul and early metal beat – a few hits and lots of obscurities, many in their new-to-CD extended 1 2-inch iterations.





Gil Scott-Heron Free Will AAA Remastered Edition

XXQLP 126 (LP)

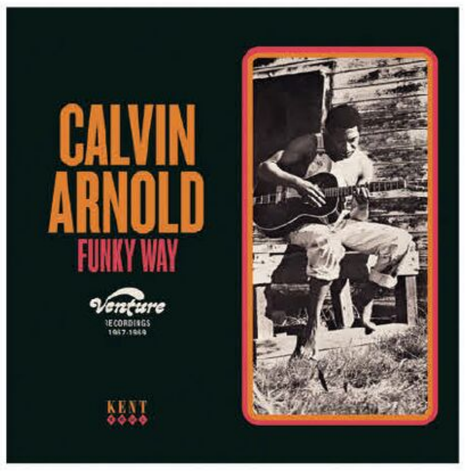
A special all-analogue chain edition of "Free Will" cut by Frank Merritt at The Carvery in London using the original master tape. Unsurpassed sound on this legendary album.

FROM THE VAULTS:

Groove Machine: The Earl Young Drum Sessions

CDTOP 1629

A superbly representative overview of drummer Earl Young - the percussive pulsebeat of the Philadelphia Sound's most prolific and productive years.



Calvin Arnold / Funky Way: Venture Recordings 1967-1969

CDKENM 528/ KENTX 528 (LP)

Much-respected southern soul singer Calvin Arnold's complete late 60s output on Venture along with five finished tracks that languished the vaults when the label failed in 1969. The iconic 'Funky Way' is re-released for the first time.

Two Tons O' Fun / Two Tons O' Fun

SEW 171 (LP)

Amazingly, "Two Tons O' Fun" has not been repressed since it first hit the streets back in 1980. Ace are delighted to serve up the album which includes the club disco hits: 'Earth Can Be Just Like Heaven', 'Just Us' and 'Do You Wanna Boogie Hunh?'

Gil Scott-Heron Pieces Of A Man AAA Edition

XXQLP 094 (2LP)

A special double disc 45RPM all-analogue chain edition of "Pieces of a Man" cut by Frank Merritt at The Carvery in London using the original master tape.

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I COULD WRITE A BOOK

Hi Jon,

That was a most enlightening article on Wil Malone, which leads me to the story of my own.

In early 1980, myself and Tino Troy (both of us members of NWOBHM band Praying Mantis at the time) were "making a nuisance of ourselves" in London's West End, and being mates with Iron Maiden, who were at the time recording their first album in nearby Kingsway studios, thought it an absolute "wheeze" to drop in on them. When we arrived at the studio, the band were accompanied by a very strange looking bloke dressed in (I kid you not) a full Sowester. You know, the sort of attire one would wear on a trawler! He also sported a big ZZ TOP-style beard, which at the time were NOT in fashion. Why he was wearing that in a recording studio defies any form of logic, but there he was. It goes without saying that this caused me and Tino to engage in some serious piss-taking, which led to the Maiden chaps joining in, and we soon found ourselves ejected from the studio! The man in question? You guessed it. Wil Malone.

Oh, and in '93, whilst in The Record & Tape Exchange in Notting Hill, I spotted a copy of Wil's Fontana album. I liked the sleeve, so I bought it for a fiver. I'm glad I did.

See ya next time,

Bob Sawyer

Bloody hell, Bob, that album goes for four grand now. Good work. And hey, I bet you lot in your leather and denim and Wil in his Sowester resulted in a site for sore eyes. Keep the letters coming. We love them.

LOOKING FOR THE MAGIC

Hi Jon,

Nice to see Dwight getting his due.

It's interesting though that his two earliest and (IMO) best albums, *Sincerely* and *Twilley Don't Mind*, are very difficult to get hold of in any format. In the age of streaming (which I abhor), does this matter?

Yours,

Michael Heatley

Wasn't he great? I'm a keen streamer, as well as vinyl collector, and both are on Qobuz, so I guess the answer is that for many it doesn't matter. As long as people can hear the music that's all that counts.

THE YOUNG MODS FORGOTTEN STORY

Hi Jon,

Just taken out a subscription again after missing your mag for a few months. I really enjoyed your 'You Can't Sit Down' thing on the 1984 mods and thought it would be good to update it to mod of today.

Many of the faces back then are still involved to this day – Rob Bailey, Lee Miller, Dave Edwards, Paul Anderson etc. I think it would be a decent read.

Keep up the great work,

Ian Eberlein

That object hasn't been quite achieved, but I do hope you like the interview with Rob this issue.

WORDS

Hi Jon,

Wow, 2023 really was a vintage year for *Shindig!* – still unearthing lost or overlooked old items while giving the new acts a creditable degree of exposure – Tick!

A bit behind regarding commenting on the last four issues – bear with me while I fire off some brief comments.

- 143 – Did I ever expect to, in 2023, to read an article about Marvelous Kid. I saw them at the University Of Surrey circa 1973/74, probably supporting Barclay James Harvest. I thought MK were a mark above some of the supports we saw at the uni and local tech colleges at the time. I s'pose you could say they were unlucky to be maybe just a shade behind the peak time for prog bands – almost like the way Plummet Airlines would have "mopped up" had they hit their stride a year earlier.
- Graham Bell. What a voice – if only matters had been different. I've got a track from Brian Matthews' *Saturday Club* with Griffin playing 'The Shine' – and really hoped the time on Charisma with Bell & Arc, then solo may have made the breakthrough. But sometimes artists can be just too prickly and precious to strike that balance required.
- Allan Jones. A good read – as was the KPM and Joe Meek items.
- 144 – Great article on The Move/ELO – 'Before It Went Rotten' on the "must read" list, Tony Visconti's 20 Questions was a goody too.
- 145 – Nicky Hopkins, I suppose it would be a monster task if someone could pull together a box set of the classics

STAR LETTER

A heavy motherlode of The Who for last year's gargantuan *Life House* box

COME TOGETHER

Hi Jon,

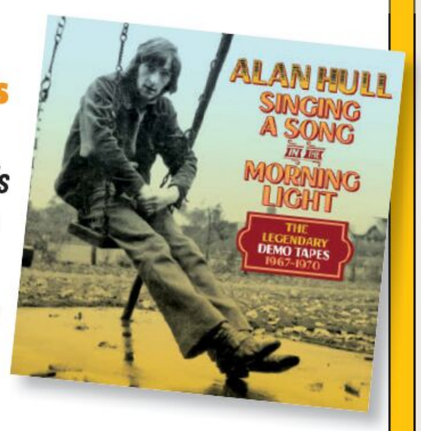
I may just be coming across as an old fart (I'm 47, so I'm most definitely not) or a Luddite when I say this, but am I alone in wishing the tidal wave of constant reissued/remastered/reduxed/expanded albums and box sets would stop or slow down? I know that technology in mastering, producing etc has been coming on in leaps and bounds, but does anyone really need yet another mix of a well-known album or a multi-disc box exploring every last nook and cranny of a band's demos and sessions?

As someone who grew up in the peak age of the CD, I bought loads of albums in expanded deluxe remastered editions, only to find that I rarely bothered with all the extras. Most of those editions have been sold on eBay and replaced with the original vinyl where possible, and I haven't looked back. Sometimes the simplicity of the original album, as it was meant to be heard is better, whereas hearing multiple takes of a classic song kind of kills the magic for me.

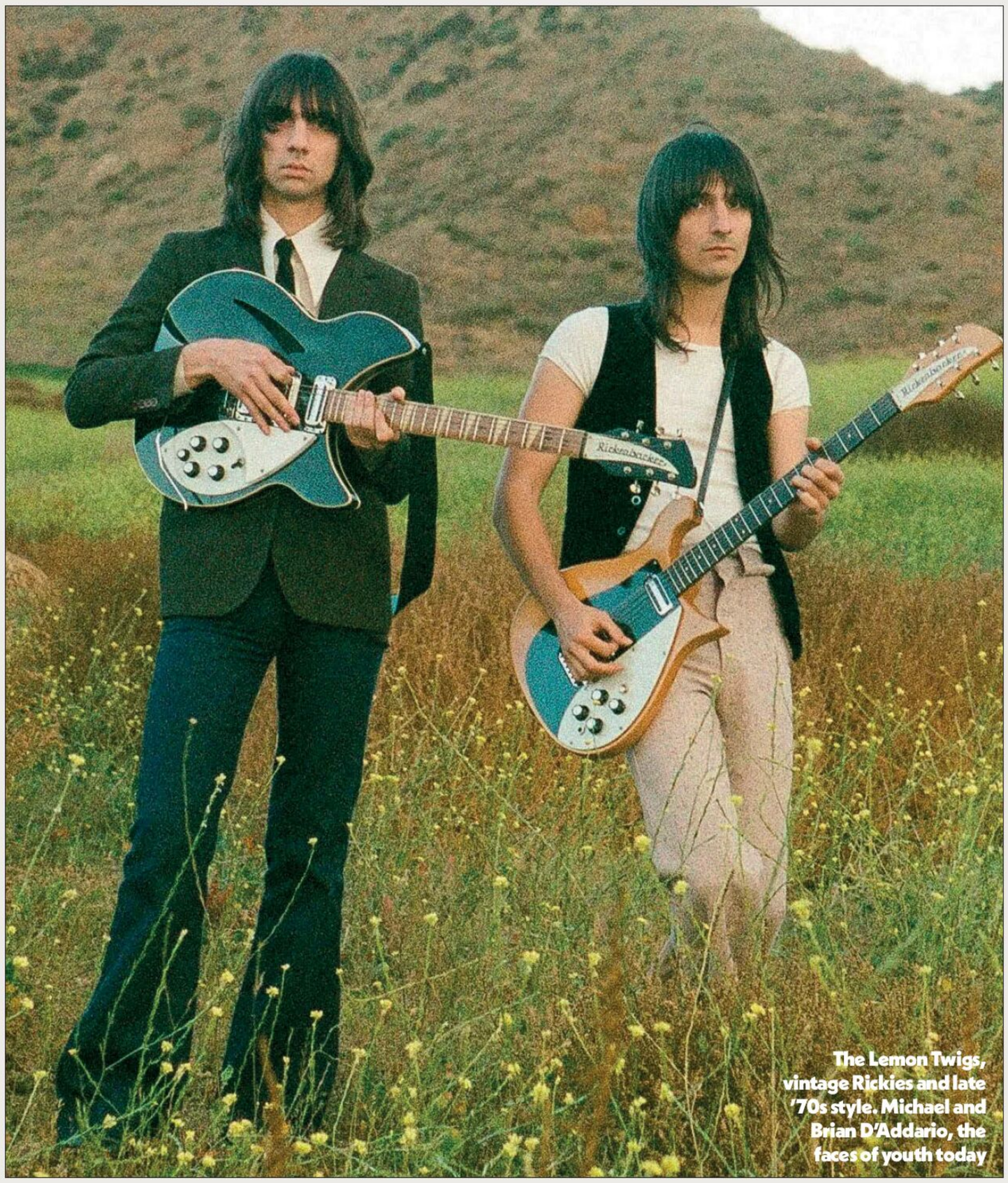
I would like to point out that I'm not against obscure or less well-known records getting a light shone on them.

Yours,

Lee Roberts



This is Lee's fourth star letter, and deservedly so. He has a very valid point. What do you lot think? A copy of the new Alan Hull 4-CD set Singing A Song In The Morning Light: The Legendary Demo Tapes 1967-70 *is on its way.*



The Lemon Twigs, vintage Rickies and late '70s style. Michael and Brian D'Addario, the faces of youth today

he played on. His work on Steve Miller's 'Baby's House' and Diesel Park West's 'When The Hoodoo Comes' just two beyond the obvious.

- Bob Stanley: a national treasure an archivist of the highest order.
- Locomotive and Dave Evans articles – the type they needed when they were active maybe?
- Strange to see Robyn Hitchcock's shirt was around in The Blue Magoos!
- Freak Scene article deserves to be on a college curriculum somewhere.
- 146 – Big Star. Going to have to dust off their CD. It got me thinking – Any mileage in an article on Shoes? Their time on Elektra blunted that initial promise but they recovered their credibility.
- The Chris Farlowe & The Hill article – I remember enjoying the single 'Black Sheep Of The Family' at the time – great to read more about the album.
- Donovan 20 Questions: very informative – I'm getting to find the 20 Questions as one of my favourite bits of *Shindig!* The 20 Year Game Changer was a fresh approach flagging some acts that don't get the plaudits. Guess it is interesting to see and hear what things have stood the test of time.

Thanks again to all of the *Shindig!* Crew – here's to 2024.
Cheers,
Richard Gould

That made great reading. Glad to know we're delivering.

GOLDEN YEARS

Hi Jon,

Thanks for helping towards a wonderful musical year, delighted you voted *Everything Harmony* album of the year. Well deserved.
All the best,
Chris Donegan

As the title of the new Lemon Twigs single echoes Chris, we really are living in golden times. They are going from strength to strength. What a band.

BE THANKFUL FOR WHAT YOU GOT

Hello Jon,

I am an avid fan of Love and Arthur Lee and when you think about it, nothing could follow *Forever Changes*. I like what he did on *Four Sail* and *Out Here* still had the spark of genius. Even when he went into heavy metal with *Vindicator* and *False Start*, there was still a vestige, but what the heck happened with *Reel To Real*? I can never understand how Arthur Lee lost the plot, why couldn't he write songs like he did in the "old days"? You would think he would have reinvented himself and made a great comeback at some point, but his output was a shadow of what came before. Whatever happened to Arthur Lee?
Andrew Redding

That's a rather staid opinion Andrew. Play it again and do check the recent comments on our socials. It was still Arthur, just different, and there's a lot of "love" for this period now.

SHINDIG!

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shindiggin'

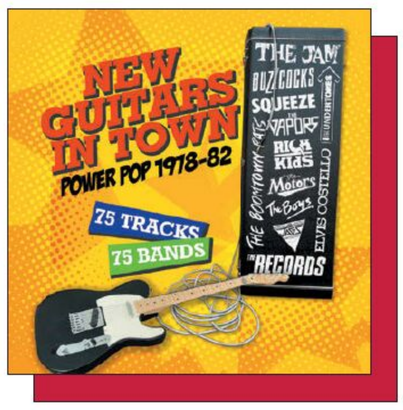
What's HOT on the Shindig! turntable

The brand new releases, compilation standouts, old album tracks and dusty 45s rockin' our world this month

DANIEL ROMANO'S OUTFIT
Field Of Ruins

The first single from March's *Too Hot To Sleep* album finds the Outfit in rockin' good health. It's been a transitional period for our favourite Canadian polymaths (singer Julianna Riolino and bassist Roddy Rossetti left following September's UK shows) but the intensity of that iteration's live performances was always going to inform the album they cut before their departure. 'Field Of Ruins' takes off on a bed of scuzzy CGBG's-indebted punk ramalama before settling into a ruminative final 60 seconds. Things have changed, but they're still the same.

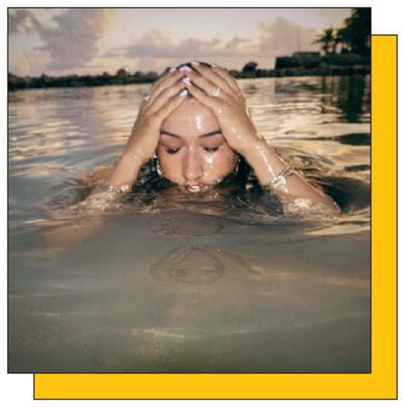
Available on: BANDCAMP



PROTÉGÉ
Protection

Sibelius wrote this unforgettable melody for his Fifth Symphony, but it took the fertile imaginations of Bruce Foxton ('News Of The World') and Rose McDowall ('Since Yesterday') to incorporate it into hit singles (#27 and #5 respectively). In between The Jam's and Strawberry Switchblade's efforts, this Finham quintet's only release appeared as a demo on a rare 1980 compilation of Coventry bands. Thankfully Cherry Red's third collection of powerpop unearths numerous one-offs like this: two minutes of pure pop perfection that demand your attention.

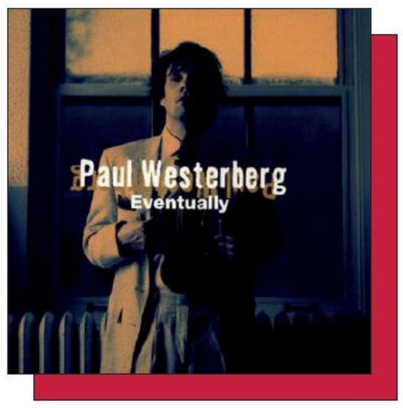
Available on: New Guitars In Town: Power Pop 1978-82 (CHERRY RED 3-CD)



CLEO SOL
There Will Be No Crying

In addition to her prolific collaboration with SAULT – the mysterious UK collective which recently made its live debut with the impressive *Acts Of Faith* experience – in September Cleo Sol released not one but two surprise albums, *Heaven* and *Gold*. The latter is arguably her finest offering to date, opened by 'There Will Be No Crying', a slow-burning, voluptuous slice of elegant retro soul cradled by a deep bass groove and heart-melting guitar. The song's climax is an arresting showcase for one of today's most gifted voices.

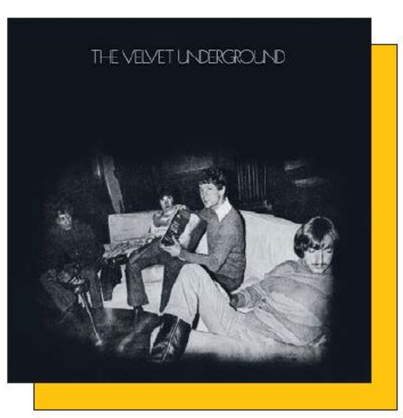
Available on: Gold (FOREVER LIVING ORIGINALS LP)



PAUL WESTERBERG
Love Untold

Our recent Big Star cover feature sparked a dive into acts that followed in their wake. This mid-90s cut by The Replacements' lead songwriter is up there with the best of his band's output. A melancholic look at love that never was, partly inspired by The Band's lyrics to 'It Makes No Difference', it divides opinion amongst diehard Westerberg devotees but there's no denying its crossover appeal. A touch of gentle powerpop delivered with Stonesy swagger. Its glossy, hook-laden production led to it being released as a single, which peaked at #21 on *Billboard*'s Alternative Songs Chart.

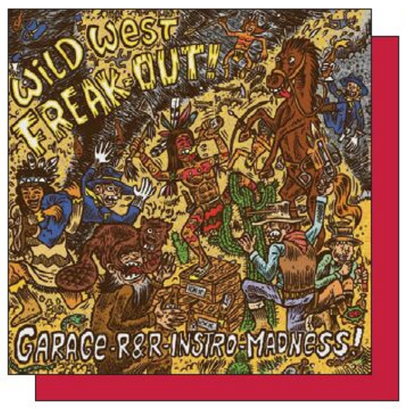
Available on: Eventually (REPRISE LP)



THE VELVET UNDERGROUND
Pale Blue Eyes

Hard to believe that this year marks the 55th anniversary of The Velvet Underground's eponymously-titled third album, their first after the departure of Reed's sparring partner John Cale, and one that marked a sharp change in direction. Showcasing a more melodic and harmonious side, no one track exemplifies this new approach more than 'Pale Blue Eyes'. Composed four years previously, this is a deceptively simple and heart-breaking guitar-led paean to Reed's first (and lost) love. With Mo Tucker on tambourine and Sterling Morrison on electric guitar, this is the vulnerable Lou Reed that so many forget. Truly heartbreaking and perfect for the depth of winter.

Available On: The Velvet Underground (UNIVERSAL LP)



THE CHEROKEES
Uprisin'

There are various tracks here that adequately convey the essence of this collection, 'Firewater' by Premieres, 'Chief Whoopin-Koff' by The Royal Nights and 'Pow-Wow' by Hawaii's The Telstars among some of the best sounding examples. However, there's something about the clarion call nature of 'Uprisin'' by The Cherokees – originally issued as a 45 on the Challenge label in 1961 – that marks it out as the perfect summation of an unruly rock 'n' roll instrumentals album, especially with its deep pounding jungle-style drums and whiplash guitar licks.

Available on: Wild West Freak Out (NOW SOUND LP)

BELUGA LAGOON
Kilfraggan

Beluga Lagoon AKA Andrew O'Donnell is an independent filmmaker who has also released a string of albums over the past few years, the latest of which, *The Kilfraggan Forest Choir*, is his most mature and accessible work to date. In true Roy Wood polymath style, O'Donnell wrote the songs, played every instrument, provided all vocals in the titular "forest choir", produced the record, and executed the cover art. Which brings us to lead track 'Kilfraggan', a transcendent, haunting folk-punk piece that seamlessly blends the ragged paganism of Comus, the spook-rock of Lord Huron, and the African rhythms of Ladysmith Black Mambazo.

Available on: The Kilfraggan Forest Choir (SELF-RELEASED DIGITAL)

ARRIVAL
Friends

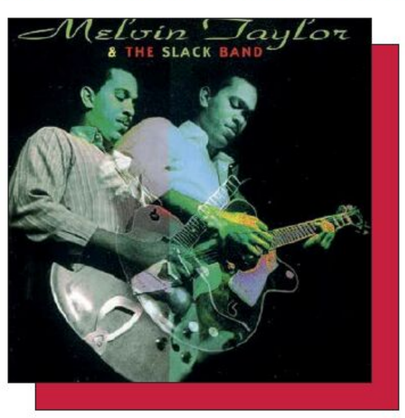
Terry Reid is perhaps best known for knocking back the lead vocalist spot in both Led Zeppelin and Deep Purple to focus on a promising solo career, which then comprised a pair of critically acclaimed albums and a clutch of songs other artists wanted to record. Case in point is Arrival, the vocal harmony septet that took Reid's gospel-flavoured 'Friends' and turned it into a bombastic slice of orchestral sunshine-pop, albeit one that remained quintessentially English and autumnal. They were rewarded with a UK Top 10 hit in January 1970, but alas, like Reid, their career never quite took off.

Available on: Friends: Complete Recordings 1969-1973 (STRAWBERRY 3-CD)

MC5
Skunk (Sonically Speaking)

When you sign off it's best to go out with a bang. A big bang. Relentlessly driven by Dennis 'Machine Gun' Thompson's frantic spiralling drum patterns Fred 'Sonic' Smith's closing opus provides a memorably explosive finale to the MC5's last hurrah on wax. Augmented by a four piece horn section led by trumpeter Charles Moore (a founding member of the Detroit Artists Workshop alongside John Sinclair) 'Skunk (Sonicly Speaking)' is the revelatory sound of the MC5 stretching out and heading for the stars on a magic carpet of free-flowing horns and their signature twin guitar assault..

Available on: High Time (RHINO LP)



MELVIN TAYLOR & THE SLACK BAND
Voodoo Chile (Slight Return)

Recently reissued by Pure Pleasure, Chicago blues wailers Melvin Taylor & The Slack Band's eponymous LP, recorded in the early '80s but released in 1995, is a no-nonsense, foot-to-the-pedal stomper of an album in the Albert King/Stevie Ray Vaughan style, on which a stripped-back trio pumps out killer licks and wah-wah runs galore. The album is chock full of sterling originals but it's the covers that truly appeal, like a lounge version of The Champs' 'Tequila', and this, a rowdy take on the Hendrix classic that zips along with appealing heft and boogie in its step.

Available on: Melvin Taylor & The Slack Band (PURE PLEASURE LP)

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Powerpop fans ahoy. We love Reminder Records. See the feature on obscuros Peach & Lee on page 16. Along with that duo's very special double album, we're bundling together another three vinyl albums, three 45s, and a label t-shirt and pin for one lucky subscriber. The other albums are Dogs' *The Melodies Massacres Story*, a fine collection of Wowii, and The Boyfriend's *Wrapped Up Dream*. The parcel will be rounded out with three sevens from Thirteen, Wild Boys and Rosie. If these names aren't overly familiar, fear not, Reminder digs deep

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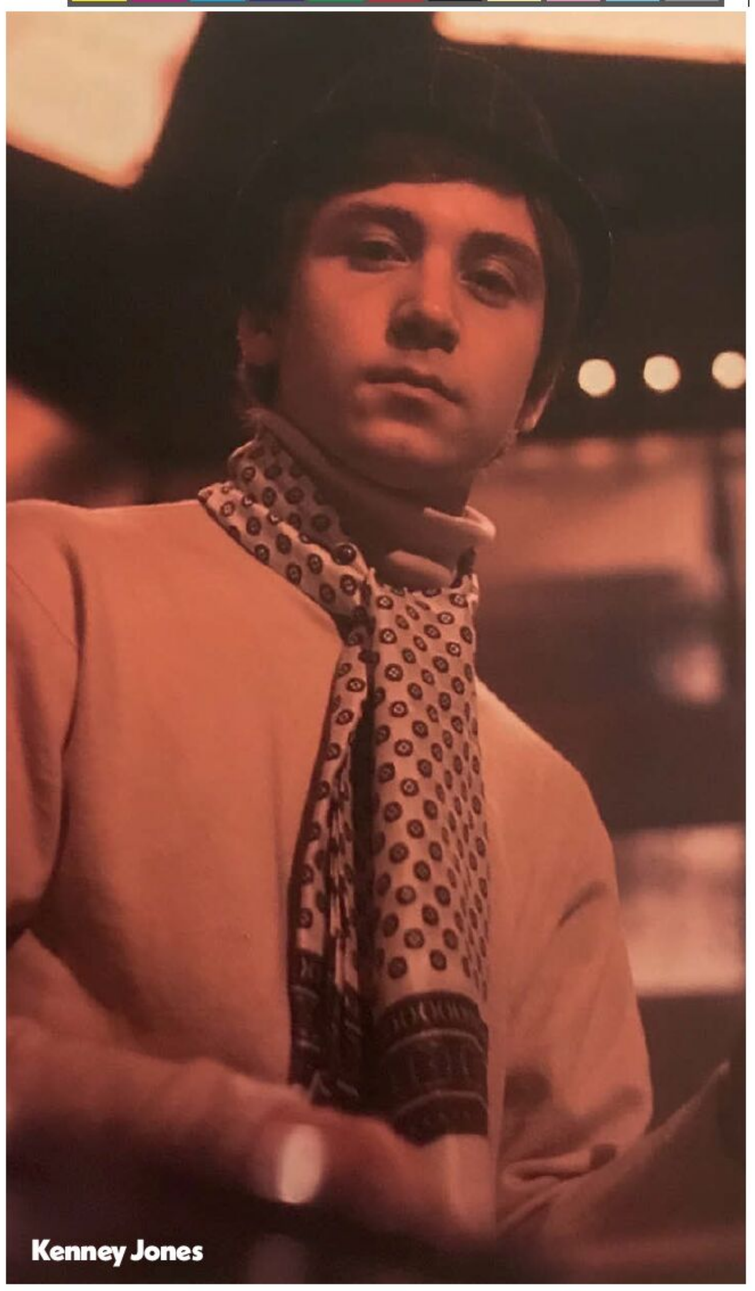
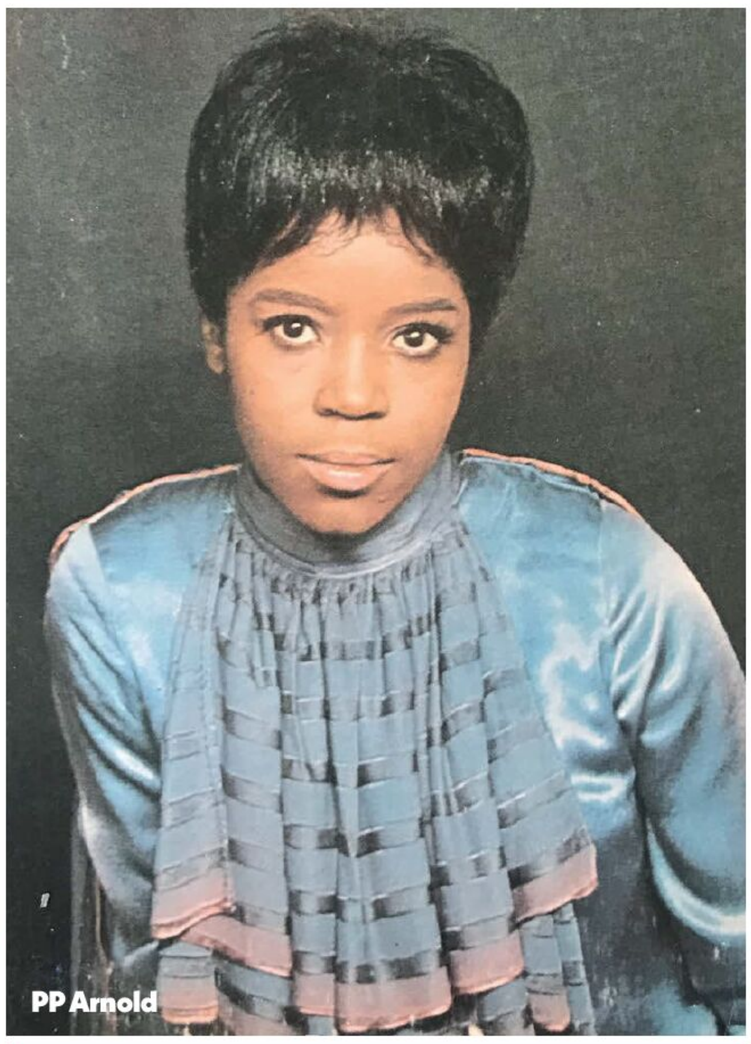
it's a happening thing



Kenney Jones



PP Arnold

Fay Hallam of
Makin' Time

Sixty Years Of Mod

ROB BAILEY and his New Untouchables society launched the first **MODSTOCK** 30 years ago, celebrating the enduring sub-cult, with a second following 10 years later.

JON 'MOJO' MILLS talks with the lifelong mod and promoter, about legacy, music, style and endurance ahead of the third extravaganza

Rob Bailey remembers mod at the height of its second revival, living just outside London. "We were young, and it was all so cool, fresh, and exciting." A lot has changed in 40 years. The era Bailey talks of followed on from the big mod revival of 1979, in which a certain London contingent turned their back on the punky revival bands and parkas for a more authentic appreciation of the '60s originators. And it's continued to evolve, adapt, and change ever since. "By the early '90s mod went underground with The Untouchables keeping it alive, until Brit Pop came along to re-energise things," remembers Bailey. "Groups of new young kids would come along to our Night Train club in Camden for the Britpop room, but would end up in the scene room digging The Aardvarks play live, and the rare soul and beat from the deejays. It was a complete journey of discovery from reading mags, books, newsletters, and record sleeves."

Many from the '80s and '90s have stuck with mod, all now in their 50s and 60s. "You had to make a real effort to be into it pre-internet, but that was why it was so satisfying," the promoter says fondly. And indeed, since then mod has remained deeper underground, with a smaller yet dedicated coterie. "The main difference, as I see it, across all subculture, is not enough younger kids coming along, and when they do, they often lose interest after a while. Not all, but many, and I think it's just a sign of the times, and age that we live in, where everything must be instant.

"The journey of discovery is not as exciting anymore, everything is just one click away, and arrives a few days later at home. The thrill of the chase has gone.

"Our journey of discovery took decades. It's also become increasingly expensive to pick up the 45s, scooters and clobber, making it far less accessible and appealing Mind you, it's always been challenging to be into mod if you want to do it properly."

At Modstock, there'll be a discussion panel, featuring '60s Who associate Richard Barnes, the writer of *Mod* (a book that clearly fuelled the revival), as well as later flag wavers Eddie Piller and Paul Hallam, plus a host of other movers and shakers from across the eras, including Bailey, who will no doubt have much to add to the discussion.

"I'm always amazed when young kids come along to the events or get a band together, because we had well known artists like The Jam, 2 Tone and later Britpop, chart topping bands. Although it was tribal and dangerous at times to be a mod, there were thousands of us"

Sixty years is a long time. First, The Small Faces took their R&B stylings into '70s good-time rock with Faces and Humble Pie, The Action became enlightened heads as Mighty Baby, and Bowie and Bolan went glam. Next, the fly-by-night '79 revival bands moved on, and what then became the '80s era splintered into Acid Jazz, later readapting and embracing the mid-60s and glam eras with Britpop and a whole new audience. It's certain that many of the scene's past adherents would never have expected to be celebrating mod at 60.

"As you mature, your taste buds enjoy things you would dismiss as a kid," adds Rob sagely, "and the same goes for mod. That's the beauty of it and the reason it's lasted this long. The sheer amount of variety; for some it's the scooters, others the clobber. I love it all, but for me the music is paramount. Some of the music mods enjoy crosses over other scenes, it's just the dances that are different."

The string of events making up Modstock 2024 will run for three days across the Easter weekend, with a scooter run, the mentioned Q&A panel, club night Crossfire and a deejay laden boat cruise, as well as fashion, films, a market, and of course, bands. These run the gamut from '60s legends, The Small Faces' Kenney Jones, PP Arnold and '80s mod icon Fay Hallam of Makin' Time,'90s German band The Apemen, who have played at every Modstock event, new-wave inspired kids The Molotovs, the psych flavours of The Crystal Teardrop and boogaloo rhythms of Big Boss Man.

"It feels good, and I'm really excited about it as mods from around the world come to London to party," says Bailey of the third instalment of Modstock. "I honestly thought the last one in 2014, celebrating the big 50, would be the last. We literally have mods from all eras at our Brighton and Margate weekenders.

"I'm always amazed when young kids come along to the events or get a band together, because we had well-known artists like The Jam, 2 Tone and later Britpop, chart topping bands. Although it was tribal and dangerous at times to be a mod, there were thousands of us. Today's youngsters are amazed when they hear the stories about the grief we had back then. Many get into it through parents, but also the more inquisitive kids discover it through the digital age. TV adverts, films, or documentaries often reference mod. The unique thing about the UK is our subcultures. They are in our DNA. So, mod continues to be relevant, influencing music, fashion, art, and design. The deejays on the scene continue to dig for lost '60s treasures for the dancers and collectors, and the bands naturally add their own twist on the music.

"Those who have been into mod all the way through have grown with it, and let's face it, there is so much variety, especially musically. How could you ever get bored? You could live to be 100 and still not hear everything. There are those whose kids have grown up and flown the nest, who have more free time and income, who wanna pick up from where they left off. All subcultures are finding the same issues with the age demographic and are hoping for a renaissance of youngsters to take it further into the 21st Century. I intend to enjoy every moment, as I always do."

Long may it last.

Modstock runs across Easter weekend in various venues. See newuntouchables.com/modstock for full details

it's a **happening** thing

Nature Boy

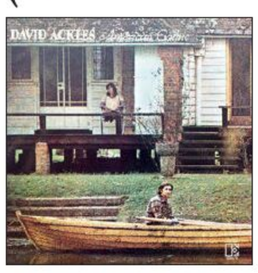
NICK SALOMAN has led **THE BEVIS FROND** through 25-plus albums of guitar-mangling psychedelic rock, wry social commentary and world-beating pop hooks, emerging as one of the uncrowned kings of the British underground music scene.

As expansive new double *Focus On Nature* approaches, he guides us through 10 tracks that fed into both the album and his methodology

HELP YOURSELF
Reaffirmation
(From *Beware The Shadow*, United Artists, 1973)

Another band that originated in the verdant pastures of Walthamstow, but several years before The Bevis Frond made their initial appearance. 'Reaffirmation' is on their third album and featurezs the lovely guitar work of Richard Treece, who, many years later, I had the pleasure of playing with, when I used to make the occasional guest appearance with The Green Ray, yet another Walthamstow outfit. Help Yourself played a mixture of American style country-rock and more trippy workouts. I always preferred the more bendy stuff, and the influence of this track comes across on a couple of tracks from the new Frond album.

DAVID ACKLES
Waiting For The Moving Van
(From *American Gothic*, Elektra, 1972)



I always cite David Ackles as a major influence on my efforts, not that my music sounds much like his. I've always considered that if you write songs, the words are as important as the tune. I realise, of course, that a catchy tune attracts more upfront attention than a smart turn of phrase, but I still take a lot of trouble over making my lyrics sound as natural and interesting as possible. It was probably Ackles' second album *Subway To The Country* that opened my eyes to greater lyrical possibilities, but for sheer prettiness and emotion you can't top 'Waiting For The Moving Van'. It's a beautiful and mature break-up song, and over the years I've tried to get that mix of observed sadness and/or realism into my lyrics.

THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE
Love Or Confusion
(From *Are You Experienced*, Track, 1967)

I clearly remember seeing Hendrix make his UK TV debut on *Ready Steady Go!* in 1966. I was 13, and already a reasonably proficient guitarist for a kid. As soon as I saw Hendrix, I realised that the whole world of pop and rock guitar was about to change. When *Are You Experienced* came out, I saved up my pocket money, went up to Manzi's record store in Swiss Cottage and got a copy. Despite my love of Hendrix, I never really mastered his style, whereas my great mate Bari Watts does great Jimi-esque lead, so I asked him to play on a couple of tracks. He graciously came along and played like a brutal angel.

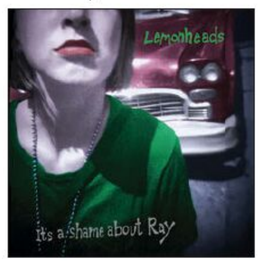
TEENAGE FANCLUB
Everything Flows
(From *A Catholic Education*, Paperhouse, 1990)

I'd been hanging out with the excellent Dave Barker of Paperhouse Records, and I remember him going on about this great band from Glasgow he was going to sign. I got a copy of *A Catholic Education* and was immediately knocked sideways by 'Everything Flows'. It sounded a bit like Neil Young, a bit indie, a bit grungey, a bit like The Byrds with even a touch of Scottish folk creeping in. Moreover, it wasn't a million miles away from a few of the things I'd been doing. I was extremely flattered when, some years later, they recorded my song 'He'd Be A Diamond'. Their song 'I Don't Want Control Of You' is another one that I wish I'd written.

THE FLIES
I'm Not Your Stepping Stone
(Decca A-side, 1966)

'Stepping Stone' is one of those songs covered by countless bands, from The Monkees to The Sex Pistols, but for me it was always the version by The Flies that really nailed it. The Flies came from that part of Essex that got incorporated into Greater London when the boundaries were changed in 1965, and they had that suburban sneer and energy that you found in The Birds, Creation, Game and Action. The fuzz guitar riffing is perfect, the drumming is like a slightly jazzier Keith Moon, and I still think it's one of the finest UK freakbeat singles ever made. On some of the tracks on our new album I was going for that same, sardonic feel. I'm not sure I succeeded, because my vocals are more clothes-peg than sneer, but there's nothing much I can do about that.

THE LEMONHEADS
My Drug Buddy
(From *It's A Shame About Ray*, Atlantic, 1992)



The Lemonheads had been going some time when this came out, and they'd slowly become more about melody than the punk fire that appeared on their previous albums. I'm pretty into the no-frills anger of punk, but I've always loved a good tune, and Evan Dando has a knack of coming up with deceptively simple sounding, very melodic songs. I've been fortunate enough to play with Evan a few times, and when you play these tunes, you realise that they're nowhere near as simple as you first thought. His simple (but not really), quite sparse (but not really) approach really appeals to me. On this record I made a conscious attempt to simplify and declutter things on a few tracks (but not really).

DAVID CROSBY
Laughing
(From *If I Could Only Remember My Name, Atlantic*, 1971)

I was already into Neil Young's solo work. I bought CSNY's *Déjà Vu*, Steve Stills' and Graham Nash's first solo albums, Crosby &

"On some of the tracks on our new album I was going for that same, sardonic feel. I'm not sure I succeeded, because my vocals are more clothes-peg than sneer"

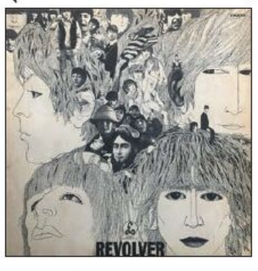
"My mate played me *Youth Of America* and I realised that maybe I did have a musical future." Nick Saloman reflects on 60 years of music-making
PHOTO: ANETE_LAPSA

Nash, The Stills Young Band, but for some odd reason I never bothered with this one. It wasn't until about 20 years later that I actually sat down and gave it a proper hearing, and much to my surprise, it turned to be the best album of the lot. Crosby's songs are magnificent, and the accompaniment of his pals is peerless. Jerry Garcia never sounded so good. It's a fantastic snapshot of Laurel Canyon circa 1970 – very stoned and beautiful.

THE WIPERS
Youth Of America
(From *Youth Of America*, Park Avenue, 1981)

The Wipers were a massive influence on me when I started The Bevis Frond in the mid-80s. Like I said before, I was pretty into punk, but I always felt I was a bit too old. I was 24 in 1977, I had long hair and I loved guitar solos. Then my mate Alan Kidd played me *Youth Of America* and I realised that maybe I did have a musical future. They were very cool, certainly punky, their front man was several years older than me, and they did this incredible 12-minute track with feedback and solos! It definitely saved me in a musical sense. I incorporated an Anglicised version of that formula into my stuff, and it always seems to sneak into something on any of my albums.

THE BEATLES
She Said She Said
(From *Revolver*, Parlophone, 1966)

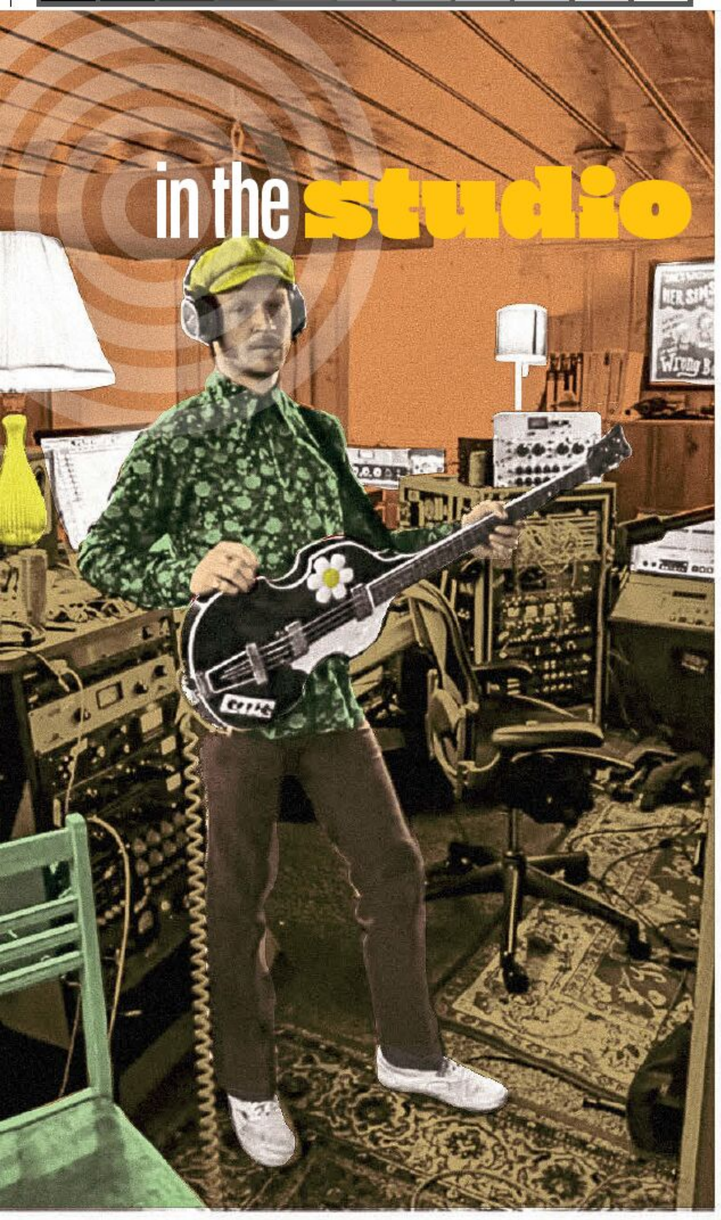


Well, what can you say that hasn't already been said about The Fab Four? I started off trying to be Hank Marvin, by the time I was 10 I wanted to be a Beatle. My Mum took me to see them at Hammersmith Odeon for my Christmas present in 1964, and it was one of those life changing moments. I knew what I wanted to do when I grew up. I think my favourite Beatles album is *Revolver*, though I love them all, and 'She Said She Said' has everything I love about them: great tune, great words and killer guitar fills.

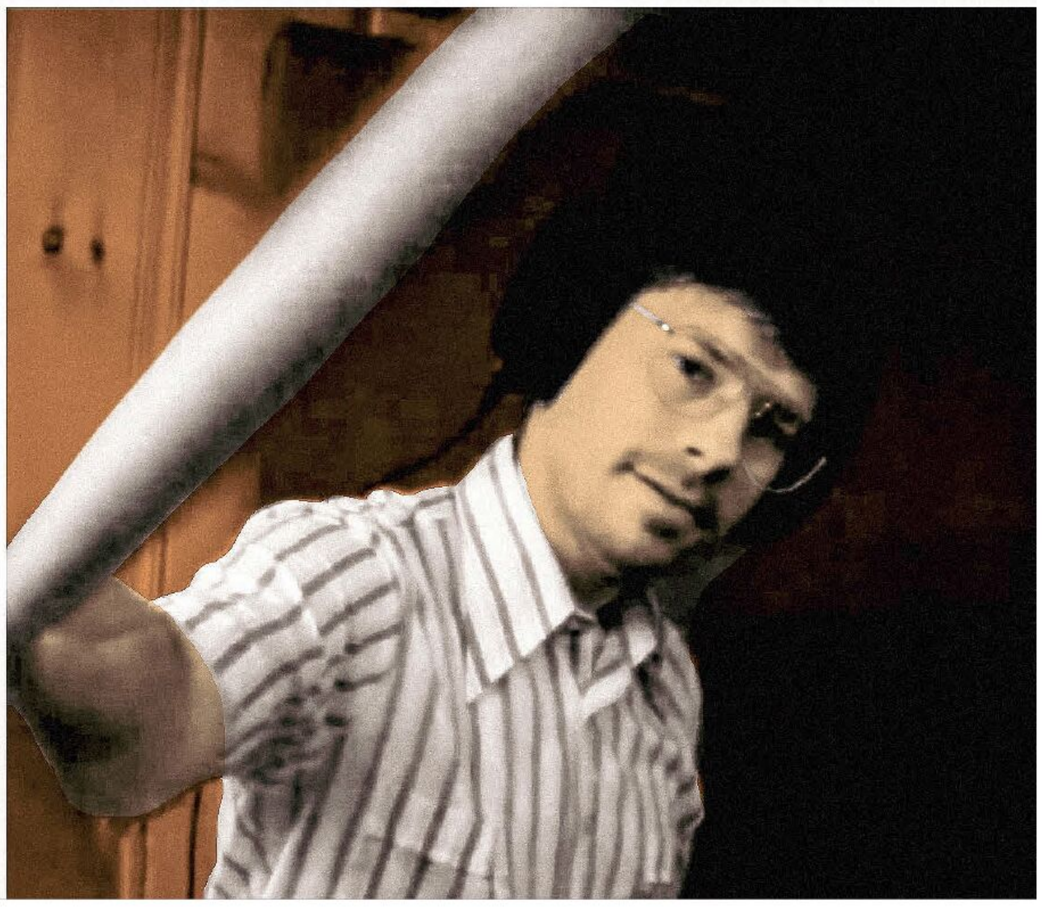
THE PRETTY THINGS
Talking About The Good Times
(Columbia A-side, 1968)

'Defecting Grey' was a masterpiece, but I was totally knocked out by 'Talking About The Good Times'. It has every psychedelic effect squeezed into about three minutes, and the flipside 'Walking Through My Dreams' is a gem too. I almost wore the grooves out on my single. Their very British take on psych is a big part of what I try to do. I love all types of psych, but as I'm a Londoner, I have to sing in my own accent, and use London references in my songs.

Focus On Nature is out on 1st March on Fire



The Mellons get juicy on album #2



Milk And Honeydew

THE MELLONS are preparing a second helping of "baroque-pop for the 21st century", as they tell **ANDY MORTEN**

Introducing… The Mellons was one of our favourite albums of 2022. A riot of technicolour kitsch super-pop, it appeared to be beamed in from another universe, one also frequented by the likes of The Explorers Club and Electric Looking Glass. Rather prosaically, it's actually being the work of "four lads of distinguished style and charm" from "the land of milk and honey: Salt Lake City": Andrew Beck (vocals, guitar, keys), Denney Fuller (vocals, bass, horns), Rob Jepson (vocals, guitar, keys) and Ian Francis (drums, drums, drums).

"The Mellons are in love with, and in awe of, The Golden Age Of Pop Music," begins Denney. "We are constantly amazed with the music that came out in that time period (1966-ish to '75-ish) and continue to let it guide us in ways we can't always predict." Recent single 'Make Me Feel', on which SF indie-rock heroes Oranger collide with any number of Summer Of Love-era sunshine-pop combos, bodes well for 2024. Largely self-produced in their own rehearsal space, utilising a dazzling array of audio tools old and new (Denney proceeds to reel off a list of pre-amps and mics), it's the first fruit (sorry!) of The Mellons' second phase.

"We wanna keep making strange, whimsical and catchy pop music that borders on insanity," says Andrew. "With our first album, we tried to create a universe that listeners could step into and be a part of — hopefully this album includes deeper exploration into that universe (all lollipop-flavoured, of course)."

"We're venturing out into new sonic landscapes. We definitely have a few new tunes that lean towards the British invasion 'moon and june'-type of rhymes. We'll most likely have songs that have that big, overproduced Wilson/Spector sound we love, and some that have that 'band playing live in the garage' thing. One thing we know is that we will have some special contributions from some non-Mellon musicians. I heard from a little bird that Glenn Brigman (Triptides) plays a thrilling 12-string guitar solo on an upcoming jangly single!"

"I acquired Emitt Rhodes' bass from his widow, so you can expect to hear that on the next record somewhere"

"I acquired Emitt Rhodes' bass from his widow Valerie Eaton," explains Denney, tantalisingly, "so you can expect to hear that on the next record somewhere."

"I've been using a late '60s Slingerland drum kit for studio and stage," adds Ian. "I love vintage drums and thankfully that blends well with the type of music we're making!"

In gorgeously contrary fashion, when asked about the appearance of a second long-player, Andrew offers, "We may or may not be working on a new full-length album called *The Mellons In Color*," while Rob goes with, "We're shooting for the end of 2024 or beginning of 2025 – but we'll have to keep you posted!" and Denney tells us, "I'd love to have it out this year, so we'll see. We'll most certainly be dropping a handful of singles, along with accompanying videos, out this year either way."

You heard it here first.

'Make Me Feel' is out now on Earth Libraries

Psychomantum 2024

After calling it a day in 2012, **THE SOUNDTRACK OF OUR LIVES** returned last year for a winning festival appearance. And they're back again.

JON 'MOJO' MILLS gets the lowdown from the mercurial **EBBOT LUNDBERG**, ahead of their sole UK show

Recalling The Soundtrack Of Our Lives' brilliant appearance at The Way Out Festival last August, which marked their first live show in 11 years, frontman Ebbot Lundberg explains their reasoning. "That was pure intuition and curiosity. Let's just see if there was any energy there. And there was. The distortion of time seemed to make sense, finally." Steve Worrall wrote in these pages about that very performance, "It's immediately clear that they've lost none of their trademark energy."

The Swedes have always been one of the best live bands of the modern psych-rock era, and this return to the stage obviously whet their appetite for more. "We felt like if we are able to do it, we might as well give it a try," he claims. Shortly after the festival it was decided that a Swedish tour would follow in the coming year, with many dates promptly selling out, and a sole London show on 6th March announced, which may or may not be their only show outside their home country.

On the back of these dates, we also wonder about the possibility of new recordings. "We don't have to anymore," states Ebbot promptly. "We've done what was required from us in that constellation. So there's no need."

With last year's show focusing heavily on *Welcome To The Infant Freebase*, their classic 1996 debut, *Shindig!* is inquisitive about what we can expect to hear in London. "We haven't decided, but probably a lot from *Communion* as well. We never plan what songs to play until an hour before a show."

In 2002, SOOL toured the USA with Oasis prior to the release of the Grammy-nominated *Behind The Music*. "I was interested in Oasis as artists of my own generation," says Ebbot, reflecting on time spent with one of the world's biggest bands. "They were funny and extremely witty. And they still are. The world as we know it would have been quite boring without them. Did we share tastes and get along? I believe so. They loved Abba and we loved The Bee Gees; so we had a lot of fun being exchange students."

Finally, having released music for 17 years, it seems fit to ask what SOOL's original intentions were. Ebbot thoughtfully replies, "To be the soundtrack to the transition between the ages we are experiencing right now. Not a masquerade from the past. Or the future." And after revisiting these masterful, sprawling albums, he's right. It was always heady, trippy, psychedelic music that fitted the time it was made. Just like the band's inspirations, these albums will continue to endure.

The Soundtrack Of Our Lives appear at The Electric Ballroom on 6th March. Visit seetickets.com for booking

"Let's just see if there was any energy there. And there was. The distortion of time seemed to make sense, finally"

The Soundtrack Of Our Lives with Ebbot, third from right

Reaching For The Light

The Coral's drummer **IAN SKELLY** returns with a third solo album featuring dark folk, pseudo kung-fu soundtracks, and unfiltered guitar. **DUNCAN FLETCHER** gets curious

Shindig! catches up with Ian in early January as he contemplates chopping up his Christmas tree. The year lies ahead, ripe with the promise of a new album from the Coral skinsman. *Lotus And The Butterfly* is his third solo outing following 2012's *Cut From A Star*, and 2020's *Drifters Skyline*. "A lot of the sounds I hear these days bore me now," says Ian, "so I just wanted to make a record that I'd like and rip up the rule book a bit."

Most of the album's songs date back to the time of *Cut From A Star* and were originally recorded as simple acoustic tracks. COVID lockdowns provided a chance to revisit them, with work done quickly at Liverpool's now defunct Parr Street Studios: two days doing five tracks a day, with extra overdubs added at the Coral Caves rehearsal space.

The album's title track lies at its centre, an enigmatic instrumental built around tight drum groove and heavy organ, which *Shindig!* likens to Gregorian trip-hop. Ian's description is less religious, more cinematic. "The idea with that one was for it to sound like it was from an old kung-fu movie." Another key track is 'Sweet Love', a lovelorn evocation of dusty deserts. "I wanted that to feel as if it was from a 1969 biker movie starring Dennis Wilson, you know? No dialogue but plenty of great shots," explains Ian. "That was a tricky one, I put that down originally with just guitar, no click. Then later I added the drums, that's what gives it that feel, I was having to guess where 'the one' might be."

One song originally intended for the album was 'The Way You Are', which ended up instead on The Coral's 2023 opus *Sea Of Mirrors* at keyboardist Nick Power's insistence. To replace the song, Ian revisited 'Roving Jewel' from The Coral's *Butterfly House* album. The newly recorded version sits around a tight drum groove and features guitar work from Coral guitarist Paul Molloy. His unfiltered guitar work is a defining feature of the album. "I've played with Paul in blues bands before so I know what he can do, what he's capable of," says Ian. "With The Coral he has to be a bit more restricted but here I just wanted him let go more, you know. 'Play this like a classical string section, but one that's been torn in half!'"

At the time of writing, it's uncertain whether there'll be any live shows to mark the album's release, but whatever 2024 brings Ian is sure to have a creative year, touring with The Coral, and hopefully reigniting his passion for painting. We wish him well.

"I wanted that to feel as if it was from a 1969 biker movie starring Dennis Wilson, you know? No dialogue but plenty of great shots"

Lotus And The Butterfly is out in March on AV8

Ian Skelly. Grape expectations

CARGO COLLECTIVE

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COLIN NEWMAN
BASTARD
SWIM ~ LP / 2CD

A reissue of Colin Newman's 1997 album Bastard. Available on vinyl for the first time. CD version includes a second CD with rare and unreleased tracks.

GUHTS
REGENERATION
NEW HEAVY SOUNDS LP / CD

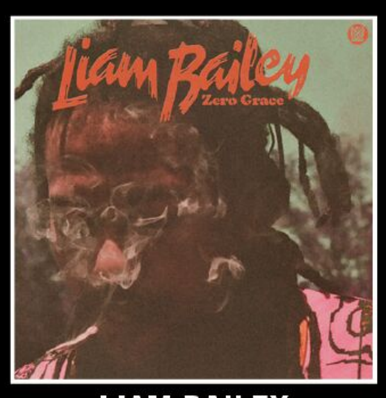
A maelstrom of heavy and intense songs, with a strong feminist streak, cathartic post-metal. A formidable debut for one of the coolest new out there.

SONIC YOUTH
WALLS HAVE EARS
GOOFIN' 2LP / CD

"Culled from 3 1985 gigs in the UK "The Walls Have Ears" appeared / disappeared as a 2LP in 1986, not just a live album but an artful tapestry full of live experimentation with songs, between-song tape segues, darkness, humor & audio verité.

AND ALSO THE TREES
MOTHER-OF-PEARL MOON
AATT LP / CD

AATT are renowned for their captivating live performances, a unique style of mandolin-like electric guitar, evocative lyrics & dark jazz rhythms - not to mention a creative independence fiercely preserved for over 4 decades.



LIAM BAILEY
ZERO GRACE
BIG CROWN RECORDS LP / CD

Liam Bailey's sophomore album on Big Crown Records. Following the success of 2020's Ekundayo album, the tried & true chemistry of Bailey & producer Leon Michels (El Michels Affair) is on full display again as they take the sound they established & push it further.

THE UMBRELLAS
FAIRWEATHER FRIEND
TOUGH LOVE LP / CD

Fairweather Friend' is a bold indie pop triumph, crafted with purpose & attention. Taking their time over each note, the 4 piece have strengthened their songwriting, adding depth & assurance while unlocking their potential.

WILLIAM DOYLE
SPRINGS ETERNAL
TOUGH LOVE LP / CD

William Doyle's most ambitious & most playful creation to date "Springs Eternal" follows 2021's critically acclaimed Great Spans of Muddy Time album (10/10 Loud & Quiet, 9/10 Line of Best Fit, 4/5 Mojo, 8/10 Uncut, 5th The Quietus 100 Albums of the Year)

LAETITIA SADIER
ROOTING FOR LOVE
DUOPHONIC SUPER 45S LP / CD

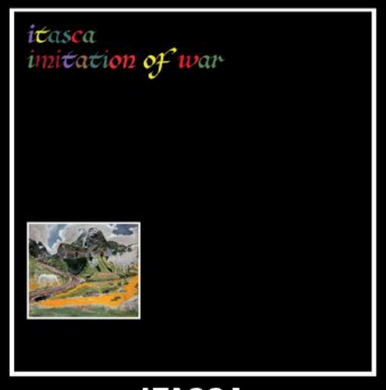
Alongside of her collaboration with Modern Cosmology, last year's incredible What Will You Grow Now?, as well as her continued tours with a reformed Stereolab, Rooting For Love finds Laetitia back in the world.

TORRES
What an Enormous Room
MERGE RECORDS LP / CD

"TORRES' music-making is conducted in a melodic vocabulary unique to itself—methods, equipment, circumstances shifting around the impulse to affirm the self within the world..." —Julien Baker

ULTRASONIC GRAND PRIX
INSTAFUZZ
NON DELUX LP / CD

Collaboration from Little Barrie and multi-instrumentalist/producer Shawn Lee- " a riotously fun mix of dirty funk, expansive guitar and sampled preaching" Uncut

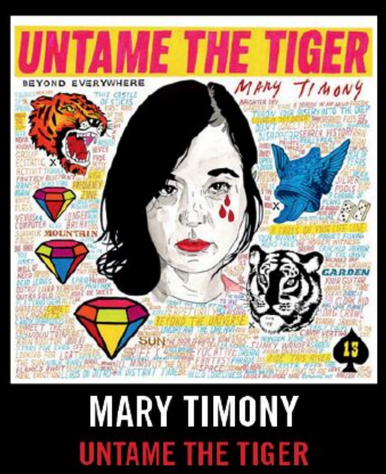


ITASCA
IMITATION OF WAR
PARADISE OF BACHELORS LP / CD

On Imitation of War, co-produced by Robbie Cody (Wand), Kayla Cohen advances Itasca into rockier, more guitar-forward terrain, with a suite of smoky nocturnes surveying mythologies both classical and personal.

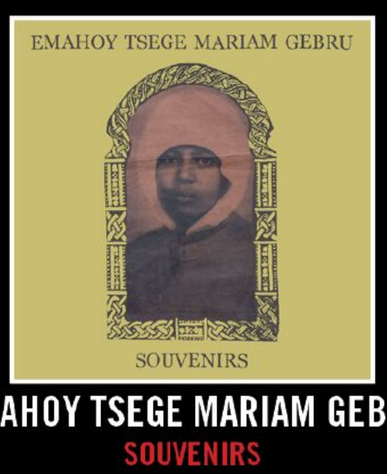
KALI MALONE
ALL LIFE LONG
IDEOLOGIC ORGAN 2LP / CD

Long awaited new solo album of composition for choir, pipe organ & brass ensemble, following her acclaimed breakthrough album "The Sacrificial Code". Over the course of 12 pieces, harmonic themes & patterns recur, presented in altered forms & for varied instrumentation.



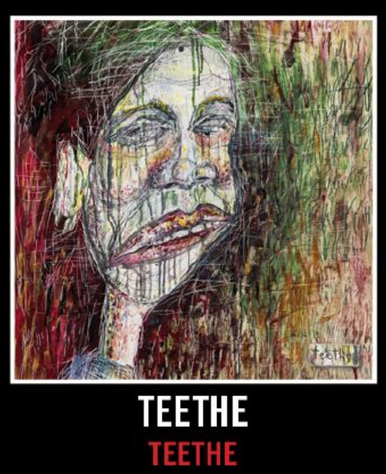
MARY TIMONY
UNTAME THE TIGER
MERGE RECORDS LP / CD

"The ferociously brilliant Mary Timony has been rewriting the guitar rulebook for three decades." —Rolling Stone, The 250 Greatest Guitarists of All Time.



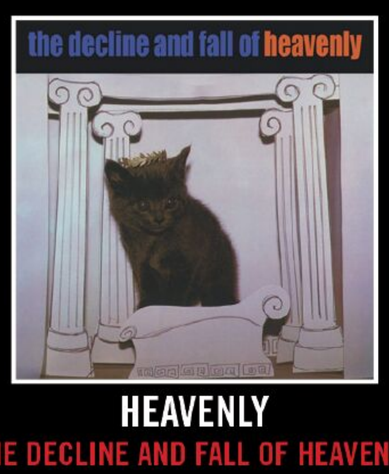
EMAHOY TSEGE MARIAM GEBRU
SOUVENIRS
MISSISSIPPI LP / CD

The first vocal album by beloved Ethiopian nun, composer, and pianist Emahoy Tsege Mariam Gebru - profound and deeply moving home cassette recordings made amidst political upheaval and turmoil.



TEETHE
TEETHE
WINSPEAR LP / CD

Teethe is a slowcore band from Texas. Their debut album is a sonic collage of fragmented recordings made whole during isolation. The album's warm, lo-fi aesthetic & slow, calming songs are a remedy for the overstimulation of modern times.



HEAVENLY
THE DECLINE AND FALL OF HEAVENLY
SKEP WAX RECORDS LP

Skep Wax Records are re-issuing all 4 Heavenly albums over a 2 year period. This is the 3rd instalment. Each LP includes relevant single releases as bonus tracks, a 7" booklet with lyrics, pictures, & new sleeve notes by the band.

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Never Made The Grade

One-single powerpop duo unleash a double-album of harmonic delights.

RICHARD ALLEN chats with Arlis Peach of **PEACH & LEE** and considers what should have been

The perfectly poised full-length gatefold cover photo of Messrs Peach and Lee on their first and final album *Not For Sale 1965-1975* is striking in its assuredness, suggesting a hip '70s US rock band with a long successful career, reduced to a double-vinyl 'Best Of'.

The truth is that the duo only released one single on RCA, 'Hold On' / 'It's Better', in 1971, with Sparks' drummer Hilly Michaels, and that isn't even on this album. After that mysterious two-sided flash of Beatle-esque powerpop brilliance, the Iowan band disappeared entirely. Unbeknownst to collectors, over their decade long existence Arlis Peach and Larry Lee recorded an entire double album's worth of material that's arguably superior to the single.

Arlis is acutely aware of the importance of their legacy. "The bond between Peach and Lee is not that easily put into words. Yes, we played together as children, but were then separated at age five or six. When we met again at school in the city, we were in our early teens and unaware of our childhood past." The lifelong friends rapidly realised they had music in common and became inseparable. "We shared the same goals and the same dreams with the same ambition and the rest of the world be damned." That self-assured mission statement is not only reflected in the cover of the band's startling album, but in the music that strides the gap between Badfinger, The Beatles and The Raspberries, the latter the most obvious comparison to the duo's songwriting style. Like Eric Carmen, Peach & Lee mastered the melodic epic dimensions of McCartney-esque pop without stealing or imitating. They make it their own, not least on the title track, which takes all that is precious from those influences and transmutes them into audio gold, with harmonies and descending guitar breaks to die for.

"Of course, we were ALL moved by The British Invasion, and what musician didn't wanna be a Beatle in the '60s?" chimes Lee. "However, we grew up listening to Buddy Holly, The Everly Brothers, Fats Domino, Little Richard, Elvis and a host of others long before anyone had heard of Liverpool." The album encompasses 10 years of various recordings by Peach & Lee, incredibly all of them are essential listening. "I assure you, there were a lot more than 27 songs in our repertoire."

Will the others ever be released? Lee quips, "I've learned to 'Never say never'."

Not For Sale 1965-1975 is out now on Reminder

Larry Lee and Arlis Peach horsing around

Old Soul

Irish musician **MURIEANN BRADLEY** breathes new life into American country blues

"I remember sitting at his feet watching his fingers dance across the fretboard and just thinking I really want to be able to do that." Murieann Bradley is discussing her father's renditions of country-blues songs learned from his record collection. "He would sing the songs for us that we liked and we would join in," she continues. At the precocious age of nine-years-old she was not only singing but also, thanks to her father's teaching, strumming and picking the blues on a small travel guitar. "Daddy strung it with extra light strings and put it in open D tuning and placed a capo on the second fret to shorten the scale up further for my tiny hands."

Growing up in County Donegal, Bradley was separated by time and space from music that emerged out of the American South in the early 20th century. Yet in no time at all she had progressed from bluesy renditions of children's songs such as 'Three Blind Mice' to the repertoire of Mississippi John Hurt. An online recording of the then 13-year-old Bradley playing Blind Blake's 'Police Rag Blues' reveals both her technical proficiency and an emotional ability to inhabit the song.

Four years on and she's recorded her debut album *I Kept These Old Blues*. Featuring renditions of 12 country-blues tunes by the likes of Elizabeth Cotten and Blind Willie McTell, it has won fulsome critical praise, leading to a show-stealing performance of 'Candyman' on *Jools Holland's Annual Hootenanny*.

With more gigs scheduled for this summer, Bradley is also experimenting with her own songwriting. "I plan to just take it one day at a time," she says of the future. "I'm still in school so that is still very important too." As a musician though, she is already moving to the top of her class.

As told to Clive Webb

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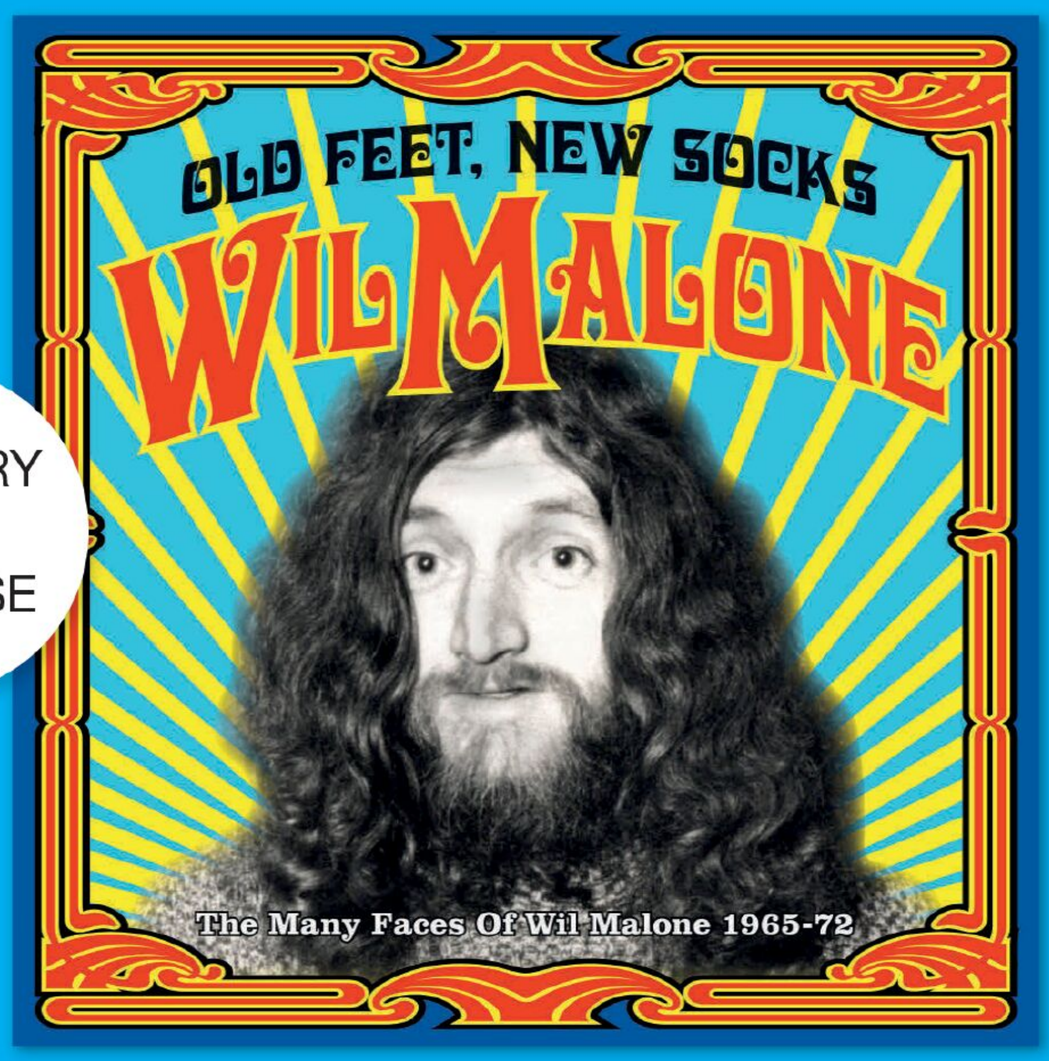

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No Flowers Today

Fanatics of quality '60s infused psych-pop will go ga-ga over **CALDWELL**.

LOUIS COMFORT-WIGGETT talks with the American enigma ahead of his debut album

"I've been recording myself since the age of 16 in some form or another, so it just seemed like the logical next step. I no longer had a group together, but I had these songs that I insisted on getting out there, at the very least for my own peace of mind." Kevan Caldwell, guitarist and frontman for the sadly demised New Orleans fuzzy rock 'n' rollers Planchettes ponders his self-hewn debut solo album appearing soon on Rise Above Records' "pop" subsidiary Popclaw.

Kevan admits to becoming "obsessed" with pop songwriters and salutes the likes of Carter/Lewis, Nash, Hicks, and Clarke, R and D Davies, as well as Goffin & King, amongst the myriad of inspirational notables. "These guys had the skill and unchartered ground needed to make music that was irresistible, simple, and positive. As an artist in 2024, I can't really disappear into a cabin in the forest to grow a strong listener base, but I'd love to take as many pages from their books as possible to create something new and nostalgic."

Bearing all the hallmarks of a post-Summer Of Love "hit factory" long-player, with flourishes of pop-psych, bubblegum, and British invasion – a slew of clicky bass, tambourine and lush vocal harmonies adds vintage backbone to this pop marvel. Kevan continues, "I would sometimes match whichever song I was recording to a song it reminded me of, as a sort of sonic reference track (e.g. 'No Flowers Today' referenced by 'Pictures Of Matchstick Men' by Status Quo)."

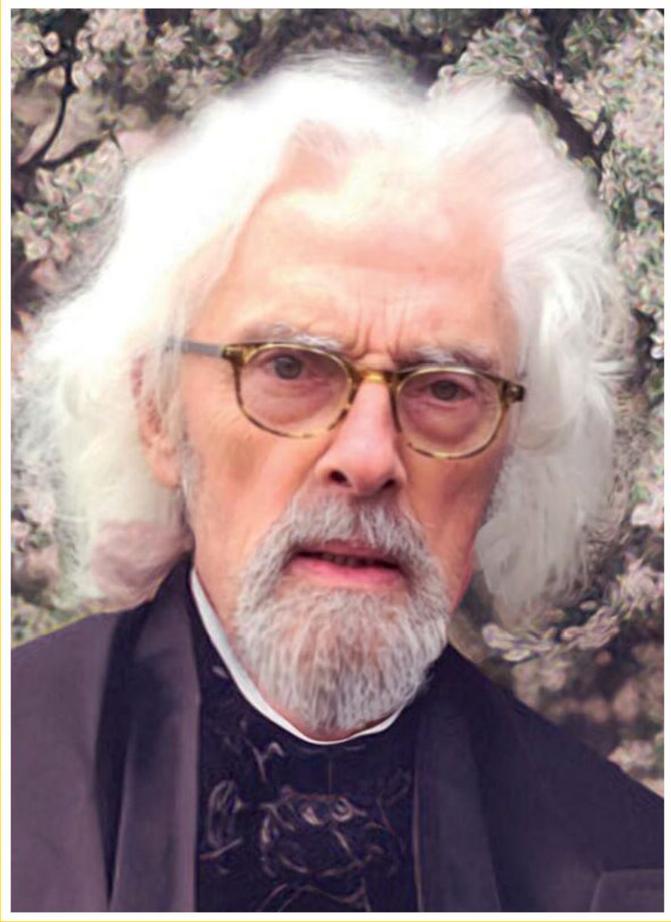
Tackling all the parts himself, recording took place at his own modest studio where Kevan methodically layered instruments via both digital and analogue systems, creating new beginnings for his post-COVID/post-Planchettes world. "I honestly believe that this album would have been the direction of Planchettes… but by the end, my core direction was shifting towards a poppier, more dynamic sound. I found myself wanting a bit more optimism, a softer sound that would bring me back to my upbringing. I grew up with my father feeding me all the greats from the '60s and '70s. He was a massive Beatles fan to the point of his Beatles records becoming much-loved family heirlooms. In turn, I've always looked to that style of music for inspiration."

With plans to tour later in 2024, Kevan is currently putting together a band to take the Caldwell sound on the road. "I've been really excited about this next step for Caldwell because I do miss collaborating and performing with other musicians. Each new member, their skills, perspectives, and background will provide more space for Caldwell to grow."

'Love Confessions' is out now on Popclaw. The full-length album follows

Kevan Caldwell unearths the family heirlooms

hear & now



PETER DALTREY shares his current fave raves

LISTENING (OLD)

Del Shannon's perfect 'Runaway'. I was 15 and this classic example of infectious pop music hit me right between the eyes. The synthesised Musitron intro made you sit up and listen. The great chorus once heard could never be forgotten. All this and Del's gutsy singing style, that unfortunately didn't influence my own rather fey delivery, added up to a record that sounds as fresh today to my ears as it did over 60 years ago.

LISTENING (NEW)

Watching *The Handmaid's Tale* introduced me to a song that is certainly new to me: 'I'll Be Your Mirror', the cover version by Cleme Snide. The simplicity of this little gem – that still awe-inspiring combination of acoustic guitar and fine voice – almost made me stop breathing for its duration. And that's why you listen to music. That's why I continue writing in my dotage. Because music moves us, touches us, resonates with the mystery of our soul.

READING

East End 1888 by William J Fishman. It's a highly detailed and learned tome about that one Victorian year, set in London's impoverished East End, where I was born and spent the first three years of my life. When I was there living with my family in a prefab in Bow times were hard. But this book makes me realise we had it easy by comparison.

WATCHING

Whilst perusing the Blockbuster-like corridors of Netflix I found that absolute classic from 1967, *The Graduate*. And the film features Paul Simon's peerless music. The combination of Hoffman's quirky acting style, Anne Bancroft's own luminous performance and Simon's music equalled a film that has not aged in all the intervening years. Although if the roles were reversed today with an older man seducing a much younger woman there would be universal outrage.

As told to Andy Morten

The Leopard And The Lamb is out now on Think Like A Key

Decca celebrates the legacy of the iconic DERAM Records.

David Bowie - Laughing with Liza

Bowie's early Deram singles collected in a 7" box for the very first time, including a never before released version of Space Oddity, his breakthrough hit.

Mellow Candle – Swaddling Songs

The sole 1972 album from a unique band within Deram and early 70s progressive music history: a vanishingly rare and in demand album.

Someones Band – Someones Band

The band's self-titled, one and only album on Deram, has become one of the rarest and most sought-after bluesy progressive rock LPs of the period. Remastered and available on 1LP splatter.

Caravan – In the Land of Grey and Pink

One of the defining albums of the era, deemed one of the Greatest Prog Rock Albums of All Time (Rolling Stone) and Best Cosmic Rock Albums (Q and MOJO).

This reissue set features a pink and grey marble 2LP, which features live BBC live sessions tracks made available for the first time on vinyl.

DECCA DERAM

it's a **happening** thing

A Proper Stinging

THE HORNETS are the latest beat group to kick up a storm in London's pubs and clubs. **DUNCAN FLETCHER** gets hip to their grooves

A group not averse to loading up the van and hitting the road hard is west London rhythm, beat and blues quartet The Hornets. Guitarist Bailey Penny formed the group in 2017 while still at school. "I named the band after Doc Hudson from the film *Cars*, who is a Hudson Hornet," he explains.

When the other members left in 2021 a new line-up was formed featuring Bailey's university pal Fil Krisan on drums, and newly auditioned members vocalist Samuel Winn and bassist Nelson Maclure. "I sent a video demo of 'My Generation' to Bailey, who was like, 'Sounds alright,'" says Nelson. "Then after a live audition, he was like, 'Sounds alright.' Then we did our first gig ever at The Questors Theatre." They've since clocked up over 100 shows, mixing mod-friendly '60s favourites with their own material. "We see what gets people dancing and we've applied these elements to our original music," offers Bailey.

The band are also busy recording in Bailey's own El Royale Studio. "It's a relatively small room with instrument placement similar to Joe Meek's studio, as I find that this gives the best separation," says Bailey. "The drums are a mis-match of some old Premier and Edgware kits, miked similarly to Shel Talmy's technique. The bass is always DI'd, and the guitar played through a Vox AC30."

Their most recent single features Samuel and Bailey sharing vocals on 'It's So Easy'. "It's a bit like a powerpop retelling of The Everly Brothers' 'All I Have To Do Is Dream', at least thematically," says Bailey. It's coupled with 'Farmer Brown', penned by drummer Fil. "There is a story, I guess," he says, "about a man who murdered someone. But it doesn't come from anything personal."

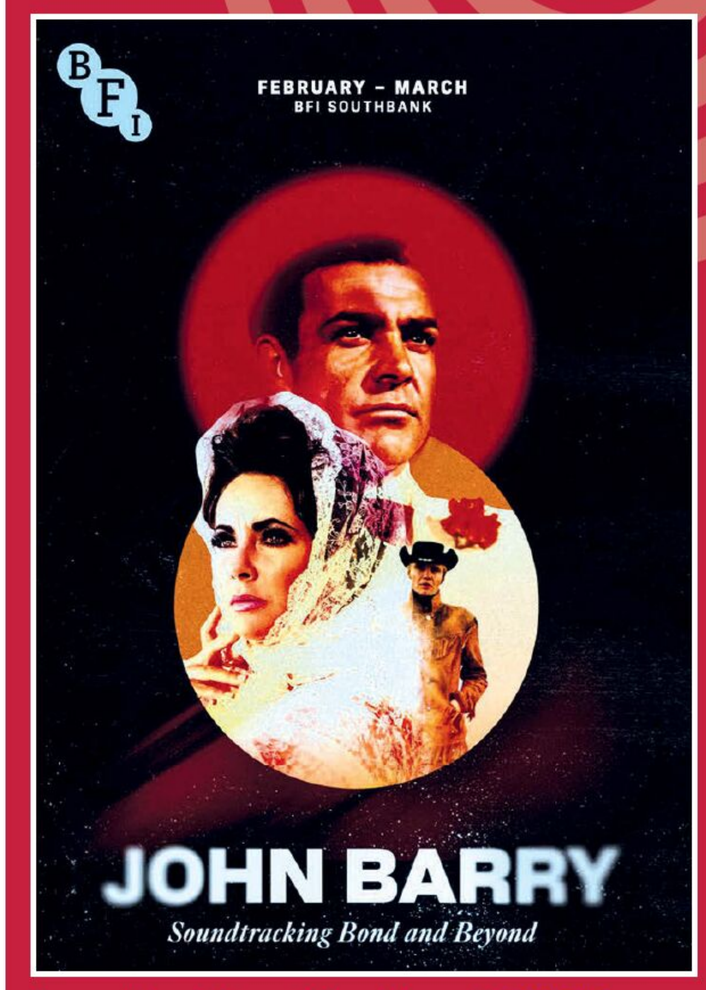
A full-length album is being prepared at time of writing. With songwriting from all four members, it's a chance to show their full range of influences. Nelson cites James Jamerson as his main inspiration, while Fil is a fan of drum legends Bonham, Ward, Moon and Mitchell. Bailey favours '60s beat gear along with an eclectic musical education gained while working at Nightfly Records in Uxbridge. Samuel's musical passions were sparked by his father. "My dad would play Carl Perkins and Lonnie Donegan, early '50s and '60s rock 'n' roll. Since I've been with The Hornets I've grown more into the English side of things – The Who, The Kinks – I've started to move over from the dark side of rock 'n' roll!"

"Since I've been with The Hornets I've grown more into the English side of things – The Who, The Kinks – I've started to move over from the dark side of rock 'n' roll!"

'It's So Easy' / 'Farmer Brown' is streaming on all platforms now. The full-length album follows in March

The Hornets. Buzzin'!

good news



Prepare to be shaken *and* stirred. As part of **JOHN BARRY: SOUNDTRACKING BOND AND BEYOND**, a retrospective dedicated to the great composer, the BFI Southbank hosts a series of events and screenings in February and March. Season curator Bob Stanley and other guests will assess the enduring legacy of Barry's scores for British films in Spies, Swingers & Shadows: The Films And Scores Of John Barry on 6th February. Joint tickets are available for the discussion and a screening of *You Only Live Twice*, with screenings of *The Ipcress File*, *Midnight Cowboy*, *Walkabout*, with less-heralded Barry-scored pictures *Four In The Morning* and *Petulia* to follow.
bfi/org.uk

Paisley Underground icons **RAIN PARADE** have announced a tour of Britain and mainland Europe in June. Formed in 1981, the influential LA psychedelic revivalists broke up five years later. The current line-up includes founding members Matt Piucci and Steven Roback and longstanding associate John Thoman. Their shows follow the release last year of the album *Last Days Of A Dying Sun*. Given the less than optimistic forecast of that title and near four decades since their previous record *Crashing Dream*, we recommend booking now rather than waiting for a future return to these shores.
rainparadeofficial.com

Forget your wellies and grab some wooden shoes. London-based independent label **FUZZ CLUB** will be hosting its first music festival in four years at the Effenaar venue in the Dutch city of Eindhoven between 3rd and 4th May. The weekend celebration "of all things fuzz, reverb and drone" promises an eclectic array of artists including Crows, Frankie & The Witch Fingers, The Men, and Night Beats. Tickets, which include day passes and wheelchair access, are available now. You can get a taste of what awaits by checking out the sights and sounds available on the event website.
effenaar.nl/nl/fuzzclubeindhoven2024

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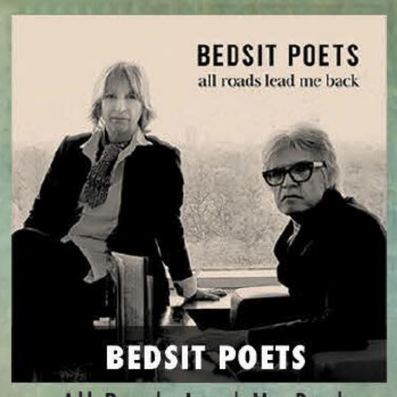
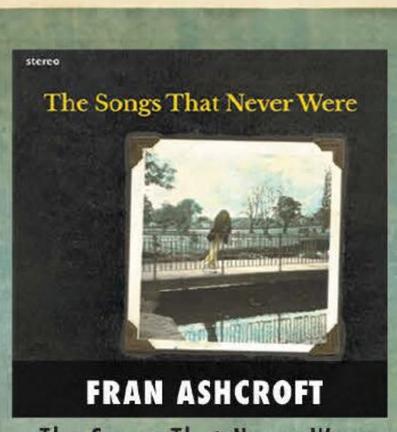


BEDSIT POETS

All Roads Lead Me Back

RIYL Patti Smith, Big Star
Broken Bells, The Lemon Twigs



FRAN ASHCROFT

The Songs That Never Were

RIYL Syd Barrett, Beck,
The Kinks, Lambchop, Yo La Tengo

FERNANDO PERDOMO
MATT TECU

Art

RIYL Focus, Camel, Genesis,
Vulfpeck, Khruangbin, Kurt Vile

ROCKIN' HORSE

Yes It Is

RIYL Badfinger, Big Star,
Cheap Trick, Allah-Lahs

JOHN BROMLEY

Sing

RIYL The Beatles, Bee Gees,
Donovan, The Kinks

PETER DALTREY

The Leopard And The Lamb

RIYL Belle and Sebastian,
The Divine Comedy, Kaleidoscope

ALAN CLAYSON

Ancient And Modern

RIYL Frank Zappa, John Otway,
Hawkwind, The Moody Blues

NICK FRATER

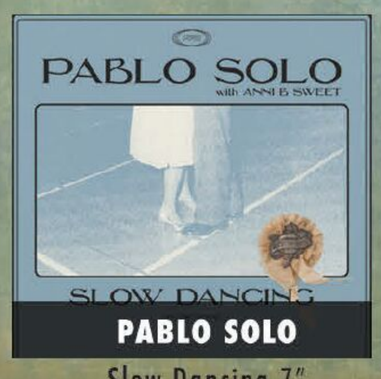
Bivouac

RIYL The Beatles, Todd Rundgren,
XTC, The Beach Boys

EX NORWEGIAN

Sooo Extra

RIYL Weezer, Guided By Voices,
Of Montreal, Ariel Pink, The Kinks



PABLO SOLO

Slow Dancing 7"

RIYL Paul McCartney, Shuggie Otis

BLOSSOM TOES

Postcard 7"

RIYL The Beatles, The Kinks

ANJI CAKEBREAD

Dear Computer 7"

RIYL Lynsey De Paul, Talking Heads

THE MIRAGE

The Wedding Of Ramona Blair 7"

RIYL The Who, Manfred Mann

CRAZY WORLD OF ARTHUR BROWN

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RIYL Alice Cooper, Bonzo Dog Band

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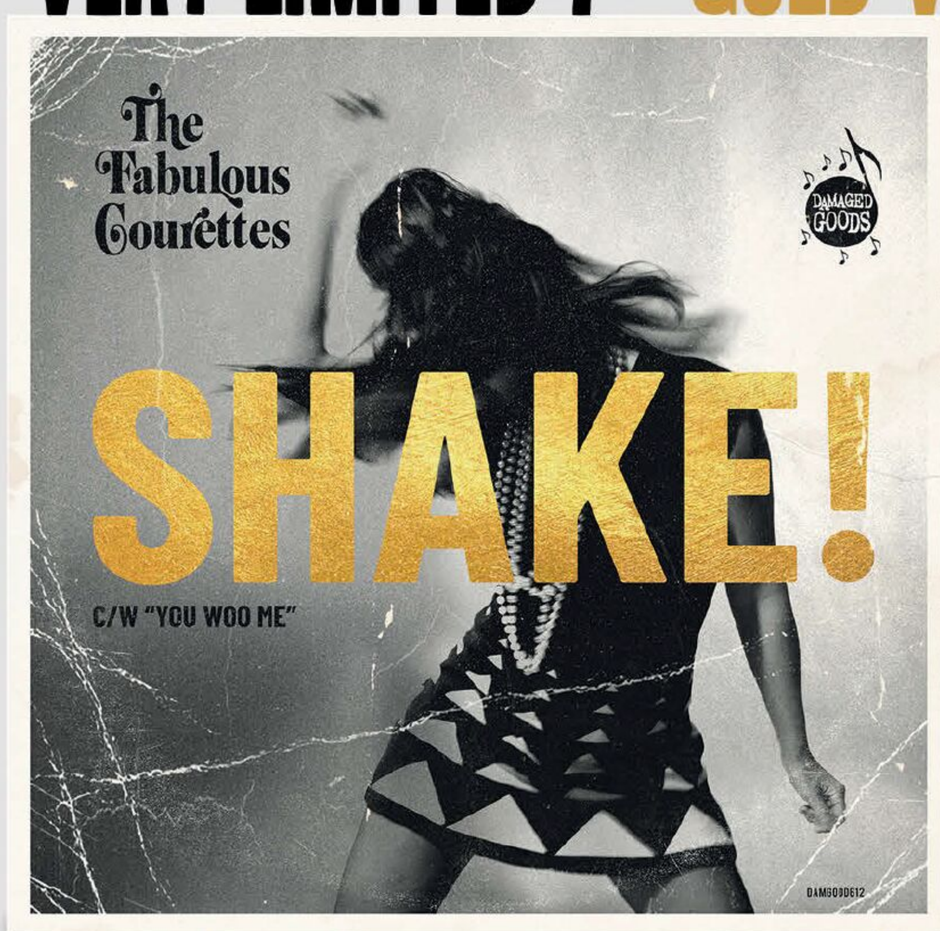

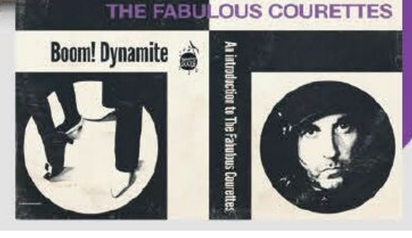

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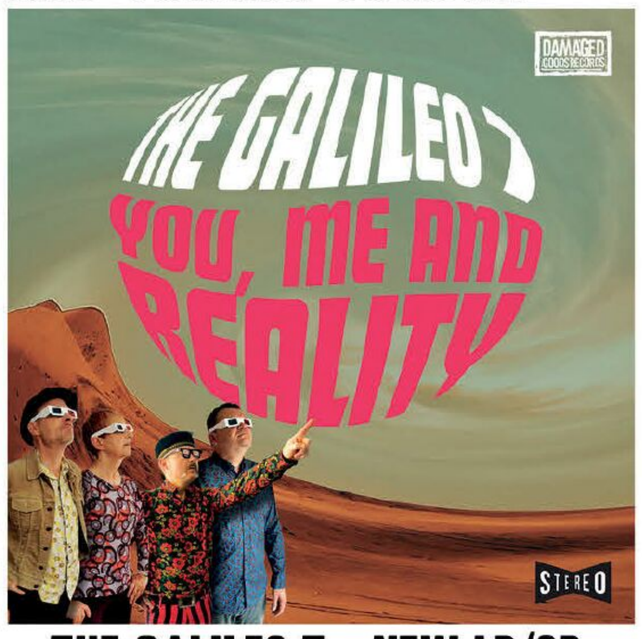

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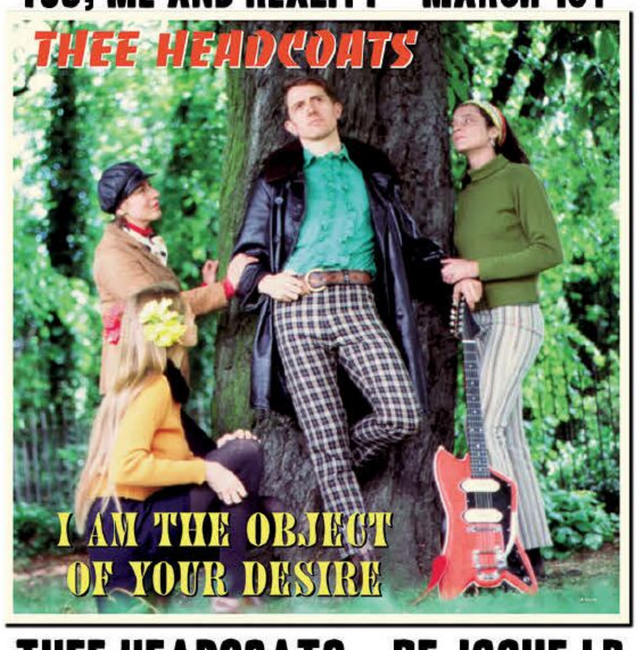

THEE HEADCOATS - RE-ISSUE LP
I AM THE OBJECT OF YOUR DESIRE

it's a **happening** thing

Suburban Bohemia

COLEY PARK crafted bucolically beautiful music in the noughties. Has their time finally come? **DUNCAN FLETCHER** gets the lowdown

The unlikely town of Reading was where Coley Park honed their blend of country, fragile folk, and West Coast psych. A sound at odds with the beery ruckus of bands favoured by the UK weekly music rags at the time, but hearing it today is a joy. The group's second album, 2004's *The Devil Tree*, is now getting a welcome reissue and first ever vinyl pressing. "We enjoyed being outsiders!" says vocalist Nick Portnell. "We just followed our own path and let things happen spontaneously."

Central to Coley Park's creativity was the collaborative songwriting of Nick Portnell, Nick Holton, and Kevin Wells, which captured a range of moods, from euphoric to quietly vulnerable. "There was never any 'My song, your song' stuff, they were all 'Our' songs" says Nick. "Nick Holton would help me a lot with lyrics, and Kevin Wells was such a tremendous musician that he could turn the things I hummed into actual music! We are great friends, so there was no judgement or competition. We were fans of each other's songs and happy to be a part of them."

The band used country and folk instrumentation with a beginner's mind approach – there's banjo, lap steel through a wah-wah, occasional trumpet, acoustic guitars with distortion either maxed out or not used at all. Nick cites American alternative bands Guided By Voices, Smog, Silver Jews and Sebadoh as personal influences. "Will Oldham was a big artist for us," he adds. "The way he played folk that wasn't really traditional, more like a modern DIY attempt at capturing an ancient mood. We were all into '60s psych and Syd Barrett. Like Will, Syd never had polished production, the imperfections just added to the magic. Flying Saucer Attack were also very important, the DIY rural approach had a huge influence on what we wanted to be. The Flying Burrito Brothers' *The Gilded Palace Of Sin* was also massive for us, we thought that mixing pop songs with a touch of psychedelia and country was exactly what the world needed."

Helping the band capture their desired sound was friend and co-producer Neil Halstead. "We were adamant that we would only use analogue equipment and we stuck to that throughout recording," says Nick. "Neil certainly helped us capture some great takes, he had a lot more experience of recording studios than any of us. In hindsight, we could've made our lives a lot easier by using some digital help, but maybe us being so stubborn is the reason it still sounds fresh."

"The Flying Burrito Brothers' *The Gilded Palace Of Sin* was also massive for us, we thought that mixing pop songs with a touch of psychedelia and country was exactly what the world needed"

The Devil Tree is out on 8th March on Big Potato

They wood if they could. Coley Park

next issue

SKIP SPENCE
From Moby Grape to Oar. The trials and tribulations of Skip's wayward late '60s journey

DANIEL ROMANO
Inside the mind of the prolific rock 'n' roll polymath

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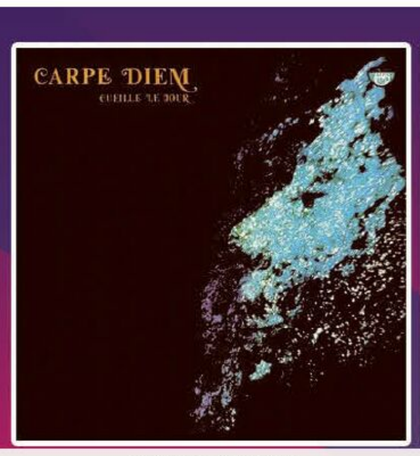

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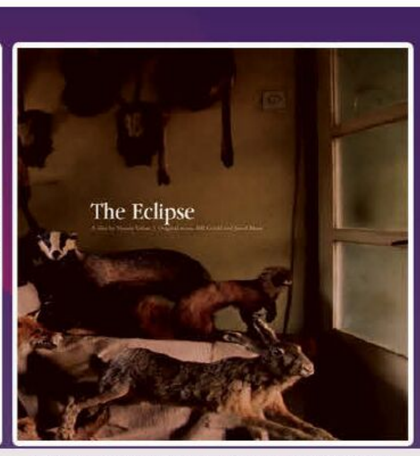

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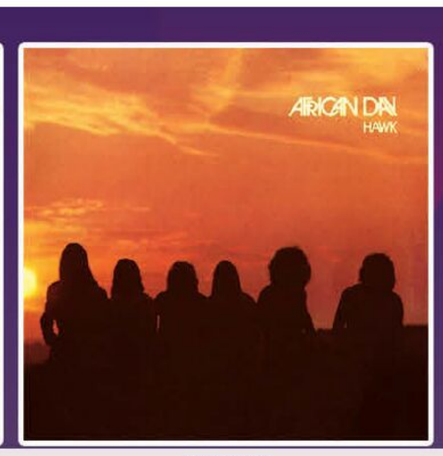

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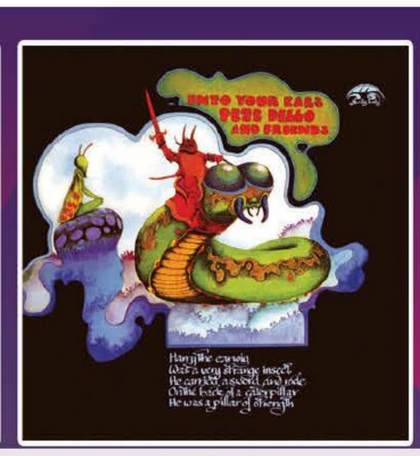

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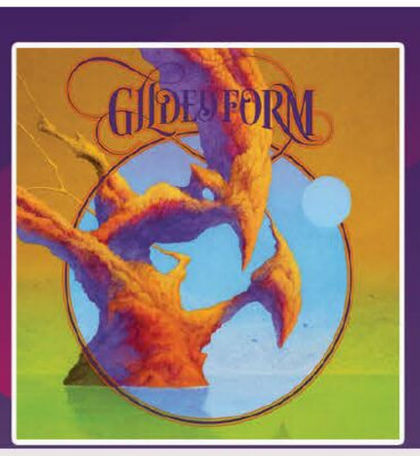

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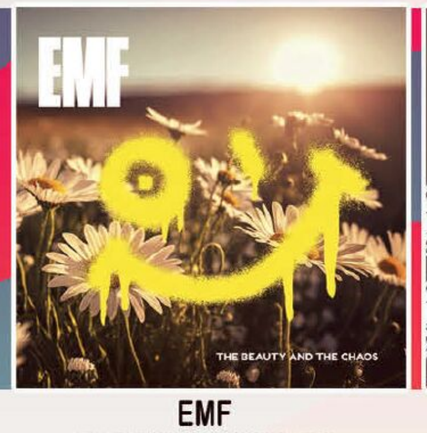

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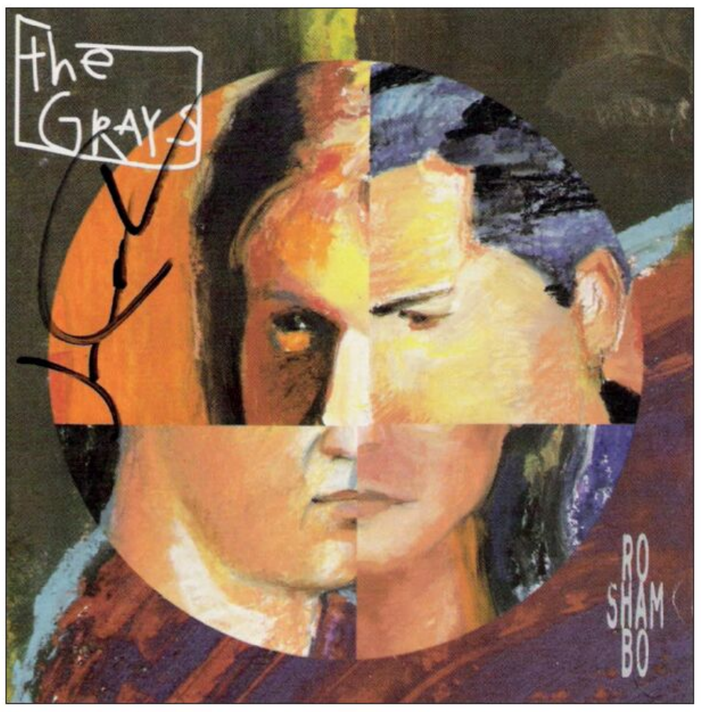
family album

The Grays in 1994. L-R: Jason Falkner, Jon Brion, Dan McCarroll and Buddy Judge

The Years That Got Away



RO SHAM BO is undoubtedly one of the great lost albums of the mid-90s. During the final throes of major label money, **THE GRAYS** signed a winning deal and were promised guaranteed riches and fame.

Thirty years on, **JASON FALKNER** recounts their lightning-fast rise and fall to **CHRIS TWOMEY**

When Jason Falkner left Jellyfish in late 1991, he didn't really know where his career would take him next. But he knew one thing for sure: he was never going to be in another band. He loved Jellyfish's grandiose musical ambitions, but quickly realised he'd joined a benign dictatorship. He and frontman, lead vocalist and drummer Andy Sturmer were frequently at loggerheads – two alpha males with two clashing egos. It was never going to work, so Falkner quit shortly after they'd toured the world exhaustively to promote their first record *Bellybutton*.

But before the separation, Jason had formed a significant musical connection without even realising. He'd been making cassette compilations of cool and obscure '60s British music for his then-girlfriend, who would play them in the LA coffee shop where she worked. One day a customer asked who'd made the tape. She told him, and he returned with his own mix tape with music of a similar Anglophile bent, along with a few of his own songs. Jason recognised a soul mate and organised a meeting.

That person was Jon Brion, who, as a songwriter, session musician and producer went on to work with hundreds of artists, including Aimee Mann (his one-time girlfriend), Elliott Smith, Robyn Hitchcock, Evan Dando, and Rufus Wainwright. They enjoyed a series of boozy hook-ups in LA bars, "But I remember thinking, 'I'll never be in a

"We had a blast. I mean, everyone knew a lot of psych and British Invasion stuff. Someone would just shout out a song and everyone knew how to do it. It was all based on joy!"

band with this guy,'" Jason confesses. "I thought it was cool that I had a musical ally, and we had a lot in common, but I found him a bit arrogant and thought, 'That's cool, we'll just be friends.'"

Brion invited Falkner to an impromptu jam with a couple of mates who'd just flown in from Boston: guitarist/singer Buddy Judge and drummer Dan McCarroll. "We had a blast. I mean, everyone knew a lot of psych and British Invasion stuff, and of course Beatles. Someone would just shout out a song and everyone knew how to do it. It was all based on joy!"

After a couple of these fun jams, all four members of what would become The Grays arrived home to answering machine messages from a senior A&R person at Capitol Records saying, "I hear you've started a group, I will sign this sight unseen." Clearly the LA scouts had their snouts to the ground, and the band no one had even heard – at least not any original material – was already being offered a major label deal! "We convened a couple of days later thinking, 'What are we supposed to do? Talk about a gift horse!"

What they decided to do was hire powerful music lawyer Alan Mintz, who'd represented Nirvana (and Jellyfish) and form a band credo. The Grays would be a proper democracy with no leaders: the three songwriters – Falkner, Brion and Judge – would contribute equally and sing their own songs. The next stage was to organise a few LA showcase gigs and invite every major label in town. "Arrogantly, we told our lawyer to only invite the president or the head of A&R," laughs Jason. "If they sent a junior A&R person they're immediately off our list. It was somewhere between punk-rock and diva!"

Mintz had further instructions: if he spotted anyone leaving before the end of the gig, they were also off the list. "I was only 22 or 23 and I was full of the dream. It was like, 'There's no way this isn't going to happen.' Everyone came down, it was crazy."

Eventually it was Epic, not Capitol, that grabbed The Grays, and promptly booked them into Hollywood studio Grandmaster Recorders to lay down *Ro Sham Bo*, with *Bellybutton* producer Jack Joseph Puig. "It's not the best album title, nor the best band title of all time," Jason concedes. "The Grays was supposed to be a nod to little grey men from other planets."

Nor was it the best band chemistry either. Falkner struggled to cope with the new "anti-band" dynamic, and his misgivings about Jon Brion were cemented during a funny/disturbing *Spinal Tap* moment. Part of Jack Puig's studio schtick was to hold regular band therapy sessions, where everyone would sit in a circle and take turns to express fears or resentments. "During one of these sessions Jon said, 'I don't feel emotionally prepared to play the maraca sometimes.' I didn't have a lot of patience, and I take full ownership of that, but there was no time to ruminate on emotional distress… we were making a rock 'n' roll album!"

Other tensions arose when Puig, who openly preferred Falkner's contributions, gave him an extra track on the album. And then, when *Ro Bo Sham* was being mixed at LA's Ocean Way Studios, Elvis Costello, who was recording next door, popped in to listen to some of the finished tracks. "At the end he goes, 'Wow, I hear a lot of what you guys are into, but who wrote that last song? That just blew my head off.'"

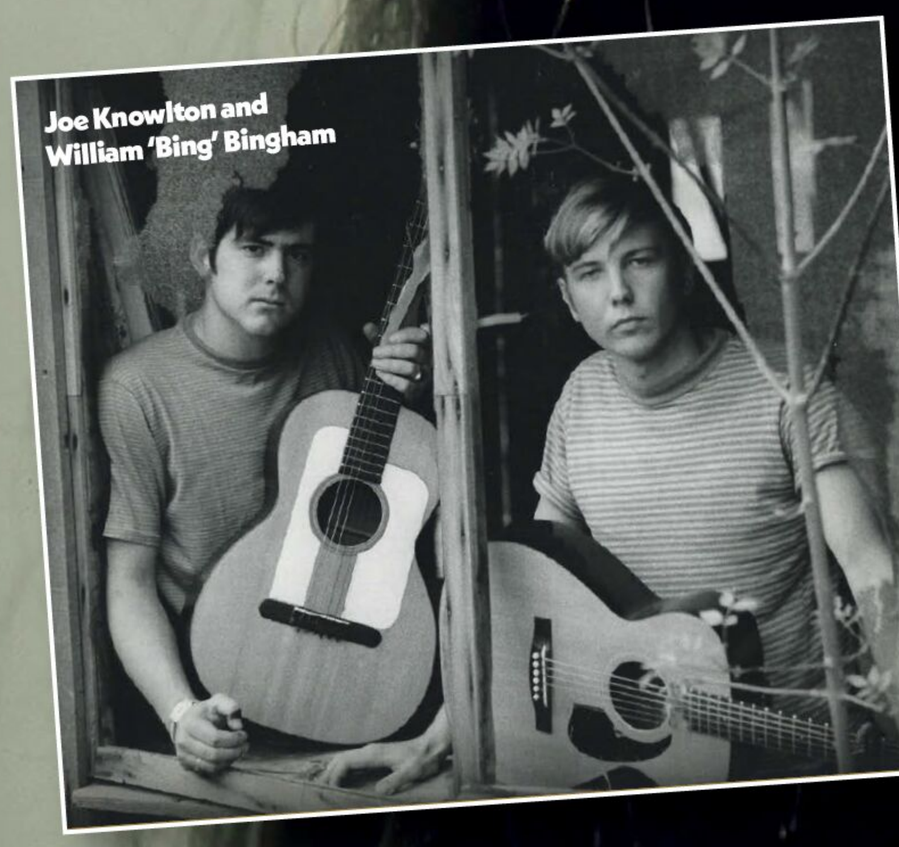
That last song 'Very Best Years' – a magnificent example of fluid powerpop written by Jason – was chosen as the album opener and first single. And for a while The Grays' prospects looked extremely promising. The reviews were generally glowing and LA radio station KROQ, who back in '94 had as much market clout as MTV, started playing 'Very Best Years' to death. Alan Mintz was so convinced the band was going to be propelled into the stratosphere that he phoned Jason and said, "I hope you realise your life's about to change forever."

After a week, however, the radio plays stopped. Dead. A political battle between Epic and KROQ over the former not allowing the latter an exclusive to one of their major signings (allegedly Pearl Jam) resulted in KROQ placing an embargo on all Epic's releases… for a period long enough to kill The Grays' hopes and aspirations.

They toured the US in support of *Ro Bo Sham* for around six months, but it was already a lost cause. Continuing band tensions led to Jon Brion leaving first, and Jason shortly after. The album was soon taken out of print and remains so sought-after that even CD copies can now fetch £50 or more.

Jason's illustrious solo career, however, was lurking just around the corner… S!

Astrud Gilberto in 1972


Joe Knowlton and William 'Bing' Bingham

Golden Dawn

JOE & BING, a couple of down-at-heel college songwriters, find themselves recording demos in New York in 1970. Before they know what's happening, the tracks have been augmented by topline jazz players and string arrangements by a future Grammy winner and released in Brazil, the home country of superstar singer **ASTRUD GILBERTO**.

ANDY MORTEN traces the unlikely story of **'DAYBREAK'**

WALKING OUT ON YESTERDAY

By Joe & Bing

First released: *Daybreak*, self-released LP, 1971

Joe Knowlton and William 'Bing' Bingham met at Watertown, Connecticut's prestigious Taft School in 1962 and quickly forged a firm friendship, largely based on a shared interest in music and songwriting. They formed folk trio The Coachmen with Tony Howe in '65 and performed on the local coffee-house circuit before enlisting in the US army. By the time they emerged four years later, they'd amassed a number of original compositions, which they duly recorded in Sound Ideas, a NYC studio co-owned by another Taft alumnus George Klabin and Michael Lookofsky, father of The Left Banke's resident songwriter/arranger Michael Brown.

"We sang and played into the microphones at the same time," Bing wrote in the Mapache's 2015 reissue of *Daybreak*. "Just two guitars and voices." Klabin was friends with Eumir Deodato, a Brazilian émigré with a string of acclaimed writing/arranging credits already under his belt, who, enamoured of the duo's gentle, bossa-infused melodies, offered to sweeten some of the recordings in order to attract record label interest. Deodato ended up going beyond the call of duty, calling in favours from jazz heavyweights Grady Tate, Don Payne, Dom Um Romão and others. "We quickly became friends and he became our mentor," Joe wrote in 2015. "Unfortunately, Joe and I were at school when many of these overdubs were held," rued Bing.

Around 1500 copies of the finished album, now entitled *Daybreak* and credited to Joe & Bing, were pressed, housed in a crude hand-drawn cover, and sold or given away at live shows and on university campuses. After a series of knockbacks ("Record company execs liked the material but couldn't see where we fit in the commercial music scene," remembered Bing), Klabin and Deodato's collective heft resulted in a record deal with Quartin, the Brazilian label established by producer Roberto Quartin, who rechristened the duo Best Of Friends and released *Daybreak* in Brazil in '71. Photos were required. "George met us at [my parents'] farm in Dutchess Country," Bing explained, "and took the cover photo of Joe and me in front of an old shed amid a bevy of lovely girls, two of whom were my sisters. Sometime that summer we received a box of a dozen or so free albums. That was the only communication of any kind we would have with Roberto Quartin."

Opening track 'Walking Out On Yesterday' remains the template: a gently ruminative reverie that condenses the album's playful acoustic guitar interplay, lush strings and Joe & Bing's endearing vocal harmonies into a perfect whole.

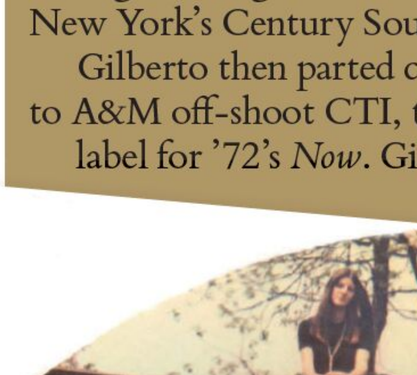
Joe & Bing left college the following year and recorded sporadically for Epic and RCA, unaware that not only was *Daybreak* enjoying something of an afterlife – being reissued in Brazil and Italy (where it was credited to Eumir Deodato And Best Of Friends, the arranger now a huge star following the Grammy-winning success of '72's 'Also Sprach Zarathustra (2001)') – but that one of Brazil's brightest stars had picked up on the album.

"Record company execs liked the material but couldn't see where we fit in the commercial music scene"

DAYBREAK

By Astrud Gilberto

First released: *Now*, Perception LP, 1972



Astrud Gilberto was, and remains, bossa-nova's poster girl – The Girl From Ipanema herself. Having relocated to the US from her native Brazil in 1963, she single-handedly popularised the sun-soaked sound of bossa on an international level, usually in conjunction with the great and good of the Brazilian music scene: Stan Getz, Antônio Carlos Jobim and her ex-husband Joao Gilberto. She appeared in movies and became a regular fixture on US TV, releasing a string of successful albums on New York jazz imprint Verve.

Like many singers of her generation, by the turn of the '70s Gilberto was beginning to move away from the traditional material that had defined her. Nineteen-seventy's *September 17, 1969* (so called because it was recorded in its entirety on that date) found her tackling material by The Beatles, Bee Gees, Doors, Margo Guryan and Chicago, with just one Portuguese language outing. Among the violinists at the session, which took place at New York's Century Sound Studios, was one Harry Lookofsky.

Gilberto then parted company with Verve and moved first to A&M off-shoot CTI, then to Jimmy Curtiss's Perception label for '72's *Now*. Gilberto contributed her own songs and assumed production duties on the album, hooking up with Eumir Deodato, who arranged strings and contributed guitar and backing vocals. The album marked a return to the Brazilian songbook, containing stylistically eclectic interpretations of material by Jorge Ben, Humberto Teixeira and Milton Nascimento alongside Deodato's own 'Make Love To Me' (a low point), and features performances by frontline jazz players including Airto Moreira, Mike Longo and Billy Cobham.

Tucked away at the end of Side Two is 'Daydream', Astrud's interpretation of Joe & Bing's 'Walking Out On Yesterday'. If the duo's original can be described as languid, then Gilberto's version is positively dreamlike. The arrangement is virtually the same, yet, curiously given his involvement, Deodato's string arrangement is absent. Astrud purrs the words, her voice rarely rising above its customary whisper. For some reason, it's credited solely to Bingham, rather than both writers. It's likely that Deodato, possibly feeling some residual responsibility from having placed Joe & Bing's album with a Brazilian label to little or no immediate fanfare, was attempting to make 'Daydream' work for him by placing the song with his superstar charge.

Sadly, *Now* marked the end of Gilberto's purple patch – she wouldn't make another album for five years, by which time, the "little demo album" made by Joe & Bing and their New York music buddies was already becoming the stuff of cult legend.

"Astrud purrs the words, her voice rarely rising above its customary whisper"

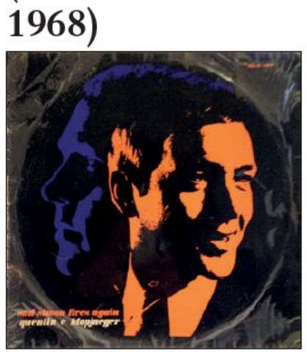
The Kingsmen, unlikely dreamers

Mersey Square, South Africa

In the mid to late '60s, recording a song by Bob Dylan or The Beatles could make your career. Tackling something by Wimple Winch or The Fairytale, not so much. Amazingly, such renditions cropped up in the strangest of places.

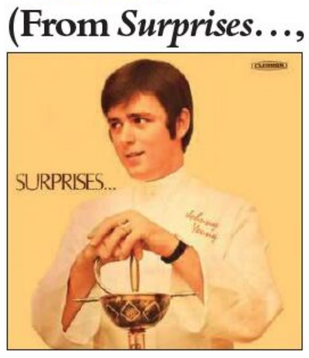
ANDREW URE scratches his head while tapping his toes to 10 unexpected cover versions of under-the-radar UK psych and freakbeat gems that somehow happened into existence

QUENTIN E KLOPJAEGER
Not Going To Mersey Square
(From *Sad Simon Lives Again*, South Africa, 1968)



Freakbeat legends Wimple Winch will need no introduction in these pages. Quentin E Kopjaeger probably does though. Born William Boardman, he performed in several bands and under several aliases, most famously as solo artist Billy Forrest. It's anyone's guess how a version of the Winch's barely heard (at the time) magnum opus 'Rumble On Mersey Square South' ended up on this self-produced (under his Forrest alias) album. The ferocious majesty of the original is still just about present, with the tough-as-nails guitars replaced by menacing strings. The chorus veers towards northern soul, the guitar solo is heavily tremolo-ed and the plucky bass sound is perfection. With a slight title change and two minutes lopped off the running time, it's a wonderful, poppy take on one of the pinnacles of experimental UK beat.

JOHNNY YOUNG
Hold On
(From *Surprises…*, Australia, 1968)



Johnny de Jong was born in Holland but emigrated to Australia with his family in the early '50s. As Johnny Young he became a singer, songwriter, producer and eventually a TV presenter. His crowning achievement was penning psychedelic opus 'The Real Thing', which Russell Morris took to the top of the Australian charts in 1969, but we're here to talk about Side Two, Track One of his second album, a rip-roaring cover of freakbeat stomper 'Hold On' by Rupert's People (a temporary pseudonym for mod psych giants Les Fleur De Lys). Young's version features distorted vocals over a backing track equally as heavy as the original and an intense fuzz guitar solo that will not disappoint. According to the back cover, the album was "recorded by Polydor Records, England", which almost certainly means some of the musicians were London-based. Anyone got any more info for us?

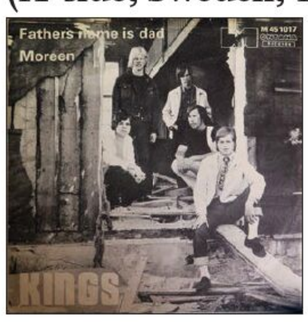
KNUT KIESEWETTER
Just The Same As You
(From *That's Me*, Germany, 1967)

The Southern Sound's 'Just The Same As You' from summer 1966 is one of the most sought after UK freakbeat 45s, and for perfectly good reason. Coming on like an amped-up version of The Sorrows, the track throbs and pulsates as it pummels you to the ground and refuses to let you get back up until you've agreed to hand over £1000 for a VG original. Strangely, it also got released as a single in Norway, coming in a rather fetching picture sleeve. But then even more strangely, German jazz singer and trombonist Knut Kieswetter turned out this cracking version on a '67 beat LP that's unlike any other release from his multi-decade career. Sure, his mannered vocals don't quite gel with the gnarly backing track in places, but the band sure knew what they were doing and even managed to out-fuzz the original.

THE BLACK CATS
Mr Commuter
(B-side, Philippines, 1968)

The Black Cats seemingly only managed to release one single during their career, a cover of bubblegum staple 'Yummy, Yummy, Yummy' on the A-side with this ripping version of Mike Proctor's fuzzed-up mod belter on the flip. As evidenced by how much it sells for nowadays, Proctor's original didn't sell at all well although it did become a mod night staple a few decades later. How The Black Cats came to cover it is almost certainly explained by the bizarre fact that Proctor's version was released as a single in The Philippines (as well as Holland and New Zealand). Nothing is known about The Black Cats, and indeed this track was completely unknown to connoisseurs until it was re-discovered by deejay Jackie Hoodoo in 2023. Which just goes to show there's still buried treasure out there waiting to be exhumed.

KINGS
Father's Name Is Dad
(A-side, Sweden, 1968)



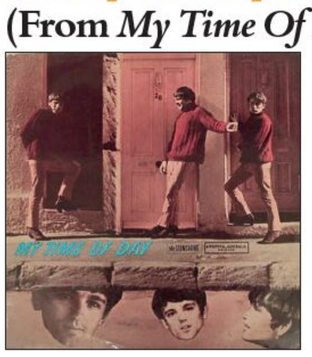
Ever since re-surfacing on 1980 comp *Chocolate Soup For Diabetics*, The Fire's '68 psychedelic mod-rocker has become an established favourite of the genre. Like most of the tracks featured in this piece, its popularity in the decades following rediscovery obscures just how, um, obscure these tracks would have been in the '60s. Perhaps it was because the song was published by a newly formed company called Apple, but somehow Swedish band Kings opted to cut a version as the A-side of their one and only single the same year. Housed in a great picture sleeve, it's a bit rough around the edges, and the new chord in the chorus sticks out like a sore thumb. It's a fun listen, but you're never going to choose it over the original. And besides, it's nigh impossible to find anyway.

THE KINGSMEN
I Guess I Was Dreamin'
(B-side, USA, 1968)

Oregon's The Kingsmen will forever enjoy legendary status thanks to their first single from 1963, the definitive version of 'Louie Louie'. For psych fans though, it's the single at the other end of their career that holds the magic, featuring not just one cover of an under-the-radar UK psych gem, but two. A-side 'On Love' is a decent enough run through of the Skip Bifferty classic, although it lacks the confidence of the original. For the flip, the band took on 'Guess I Was Dreaming', the ethereal August '67 debut by The Fairytale, and what a great version it is – a little less dreamy and slightly meatier, as you'd expect from the former frat-rockers. Both the UK and US recordings of the song were overseen by British producer Mark Wildey, which gives us a clue as to how this unexpected single came to be.

"'Michelangelo' was then faithfully recreated, complete with the delicate orchestration, for this one-off single by Candid Camera, another pseudonym for Billy Forrest, aka Quentin E Klopjaeger"

TONY WORSLEY
Ready Steady Let's Go
(From *My Time Of Day*, Australia, 1966)

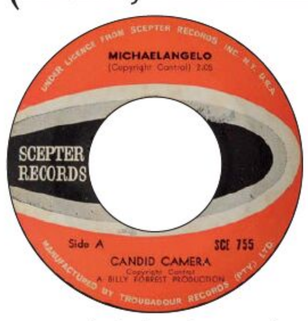


Tony Worsley's third LP is a stellar mod-beat album which compares favourably with anything else in the genre from that same year. For starters, it contains a rendition of The Birds' excellent 1965 B-side 'How Can It Be' that, I kid you not, out-fuzzes and out-pounds the original. Then there's this cover of an even more obscure track by Craig, the freakbeaters who gifted the world 'I Must Be Mad', pretty much defining the genre in the process. 'Ready Steady Let's Go' was the flip to their debut single, written by lead vocalist Geoff Brown (who also wrote 'Mad'). Tony, with The Blue Jays right behind him, bash out this infectious mod banger with swagger and panache. The result is the same but different, and sometimes that's exactly what you're in the mood for.

ARIS SAN
For Your Information
(From *Seegal – Boom Pam – Paploma*, Israel, 1969)

The Sea-ders formed in Beriut, Lebanon in the early '60s, and developed a unique fusion of Western rock with Eastern instrumentation and rhythms. In 1967 Decca signed them and brought them over to London. Changing their name, The Cedars' first UK single was 'For Your Information', a hypnotic slice of psychedelic beat. Meanwhile Greek-born Aris San had become a big star in Israel by the mid-60s and included his great version as the only song in English on his '69 LP. This was at a time when, just like now, Arab/Jewish tensions were running high. So high in fact that when The Sea-ders had an EP released on Israel's PAX label, most copies were destroyed when it was discovered the band were from Lebanon. Considering that, it seems San recording 'For Your Information' was a brave move. Perhaps he understood good music has the power to cross national, cultural, racial and religious boundaries.

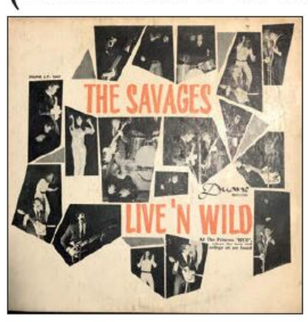
CANDID CAMERA
Michaelangelo
(A-side, South Africa, 1968)



Originally a 1967 one-off single by Liverpool's 23rd Turnoff, the band formed from the ashes of excellent beat combo The Kirkbys, 'Michael Angelo' (spelt with two words) was a perfect example of dreamy, wistful UK psych. The Jimmy Campbell-penned song was then faithfully recreated, complete with the delicate orchestration, for this one-off single by Candid Camera, another pseudonym for Billy Forrest, aka Quentin E Klopjaeger, the Wimple Winch appreciator from above.

Produced by Forrest, the single was released in South Africa on Scepter and is one of the rarest records on that label. It suggests Billy Forrest was a man of great taste, who had a keen eye and ear on the UK underground scene, particularly bands from the Merseyside area.

THE SAVAGES
He's A Man
(From *Live 'n' Wild*, Bermuda, 1966)



OK, we'll admit this one is a wee bit of stretch being that the original song 'Ertu Med' was by Icelandic band Hljómar. It was re-recorded the following year in English as 'If You Knew' under the name Thor's Hammer at Lansdowne Studios in London (along with all other tracks on the insanely rare and totally mind-blowing *Umbarumbamba* double EP that was pressed in the UK by Parlophone for export to Iceland). Unfortunately, it's not a cover of that mod beat gem, but rather a new version based on 'Ertu Med' with completely different English lyrics. Let's call 'He's A Man' by The Savages a pre-cover. It's actually a live recording of a hotel nightclub band from Bermuda, pulled from a killer album containing performances of mostly garage-tastic originals. One of those covers is by a band from Iceland who The Savages knew of thanks to their Icelandic manager. And there it is, the reason this seemingly impossible cover version came to be. An explanation probably as simple as all the reasons for the recordings above. But it sure is fun to wonder about. S!

20 questions

David Arnoff, 21st century boy

Shots In The Dark

DAVID ARNOFF isn't a name that registers like that of a rock star. That is because he isn't one. Arnoff is a man you'd find below and stage right of the bright lights, photographing the action, and capturing intimate portraits of outsider and oddball musicians in their natural surroundings

JON 'MOJO' MILLS travels with him from the happening '60s of Los Angeles to a down at heel '80s London

Dave in the '60s; 1966 Bowl, '68 Shrine and Cheetah August '67 handbills

Shindig!: What was your first memory of rock 'n' roll and the youth explosion?
David Arnoff: My earliest memories of rock 'n' roll would have been Elvis on telly when I was maybe six years old, but I thought he was corny. I really liked 'Let There Be Drums' by Sandy Nelson and 'Because They're Young' by Duane Eddy. TV also introduced me to teenagers, mainly Kookie on *77 Sunset Strip*, the theme of which was the first record I owned, and James Dean in *Rebel Without A Cause*. I couldn't wait to be a teenager.

SD!: Arriving in Los Angeles in the mid-60s, just as the region became a hot bed for pop music and later freak culture, must have been eye-opening. What bands did you see?
DA: I started going to gigs at a really early age. My very first one was an eye-opener in the form of The Kinks on their first trip to the States, still wearing their hunting jackets and exciting as hell. But even more exciting were The Who, just after Monterey, a couple of years later. It was the only time Entwistle smashed his bass – he and Townsend each told me so in later years – and I still consider it the best gig I've ever been to. Herman's Hermits were actually the headliners but most of us left after The Who. Really there were too many great bands to list. Blue Cheer stand out, though. I saw them every chance I had, even before their album came out. The very heaviest of metal years before the term was coined. They actually headlined over Pink Floyd and Jeff Beck and rose to the occasion. Stunning.

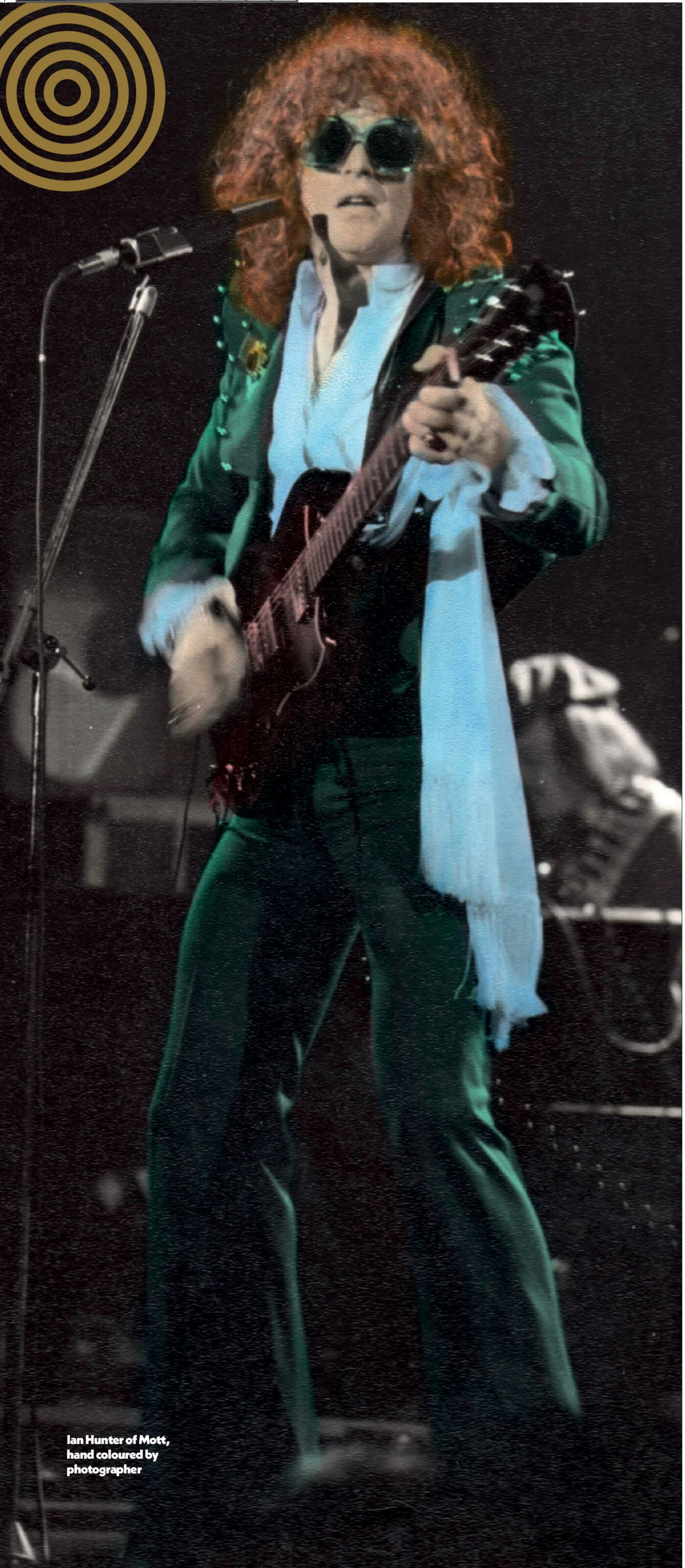
"My very first one was an eye-opener in the form of The Kinks on their first trip to the States, still wearing their hunting jackets and exciting as hell"

SD!: You even played in a "garage band" at high school.
DA: Our garage band was literally just that, we only played outside of our family garages a few times, under various names. The Collection was the main one, which consisted of Ron Heck on virtuoso 12-string Rickenbacker, yours truly on bass, and Bob Crane Jr, son of the late star of *Hogan's Heroes* on drums and vocals. We never felt like a proper band though, because being still in high school we couldn't grow our hair long.

SD!: Like many kids, you first got a camera from your dad. How did you get to grips with the basics, and how did your interest develop?
DA: My basic knowledge of cameras was very basic indeed. Still is. I did take a course in high school just to get to grips with the darkroom.

SD!: You snapped Mott The Hoople and Laura Nyro early on. Was taking shots of bands something you gravitated towards or were you just experimenting?
DA: Mott, at a great distance, Laura Nyro and Cockney Rebel were early attempts. I coloured the Mott one by hand with cotton buds and oil paint. Steve Harley actually used my shot in a tour program in recent years, I'm pleased to say. Shooting bands was always something I wanted to do but I wasn't trained or schooled at all. I just had to wing it.

SD!: What were you interested in musically in the early to mid-70? You worked in record shops, didn't you? That must have kept you abreast with all of the new releases.
DA: At the tail end of the '60s I had the unexpected pleasure of seeing Jethro Tull, who were unlike anything else on stage. I saw them a few times, once opening for



Ian Hunter of Mott, hand coloured by photographer

Zeppelin, and to my mind the better band on the night. But things did die down around then, with bands only playing large venues. I even stopped seeing The Doors once they became too big.

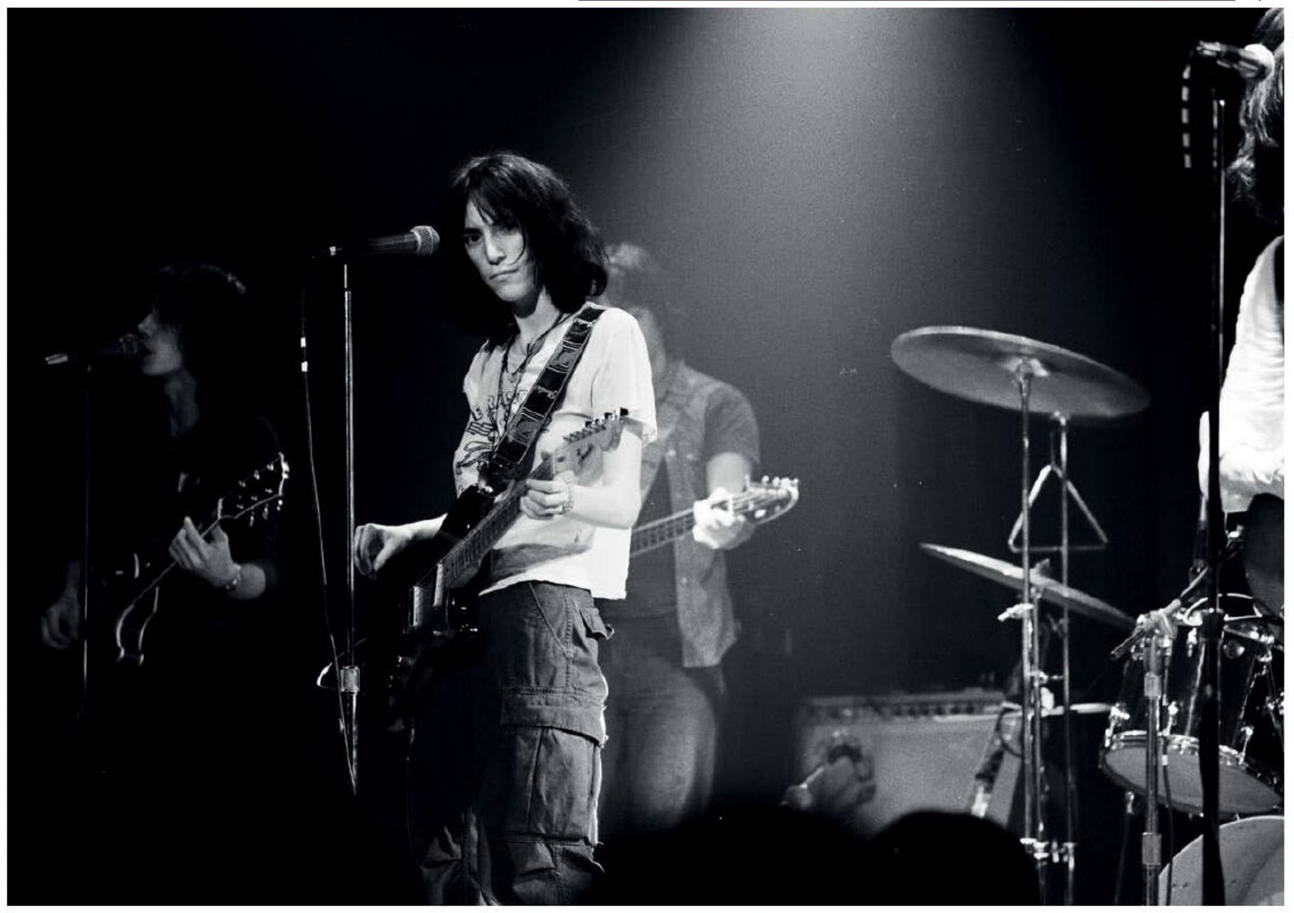
In 1972 my absolute favourite album was *Hunky Dory* and when I first came to England in that year I saw Bowie in a small town hall in Epsom. *Ziggy* had yet to be released, so it was quite a shock to witness the full-blown Spiders on stage. Foolishly, not wanting to seem like a tourist amongst my peers, I left my camera in the B&B. Very frustrating to think of the shots I could have taken. Roxy Music's debut was the main album I brought back to the States. That put most other music in the shade creatively. In the mid-70s I started working in record wholesalers, which was great because the promo men from the labels wanted us to push their pet projects and it was easy to hit them up for guest lists. Bands were finally returning to clubs at that point, so I was going out three nights a week for free and getting drinks tabs as well.

SD!: Your Patti Smith shots mark the beginning of your dark, close and personal style. What are your memories of the night?
DA: Patti Smith was an absolute joy at The Roxy, very natural, personal, intense. I felt like I knew her even though we hadn't met yet. I went on two consecutive nights. The second night I brought a friend who was more into Deep Purple, and he hated it. We went our separate ways after that. I do remember Page and Plant sitting nearby.

SD!: Living in LA when punk broke, what did it mean to you? What did it say to you?
DA: Punk broke in LA when The Damned came over. That changed everything in a huge way and inspired a certain element of the locals. But I found most of the LA bands to be too enthralled by the Pistols and The Clash, and they were just aping them. The big exception was X, the best LA band since The Doors, and still going strong. I absolutely love that band. There were others, like The Weirdos and Gun Club, but for me it was mainly X. There was a great influx of course, with The Cramps, Blondie, Devo, Ramones and Dead Boys playing the Whisky and Starwood. What that said to me was, these are people I connect with and can approach easily, get on with. And I can take photos that are as gritty, dark, and rough as they are. The bands were not slick and nor was I. And the British weeklies, *New York Rocker* and the like were open to the type of photos I submitted.

SD!: You snapped the British bands which visited, and the NYC ones. What did you perceive as the differences between the other bands from distant American shores? Were they all making the same statements, or did geography alter that?
DA: The New York bands seemed tougher somehow, especially the Heartbreakers,

Another early shot, this one approved by Steve Harley; Patti Smith Group, Roxy 1976; The Damned's Rat Scabies, The Starwood, LA, '76



"I took to England the first time round in 1972, and stayed until my visa ran out. I felt totally at home here right from the start. The only culture shock was the transition from Cleveland to LA"

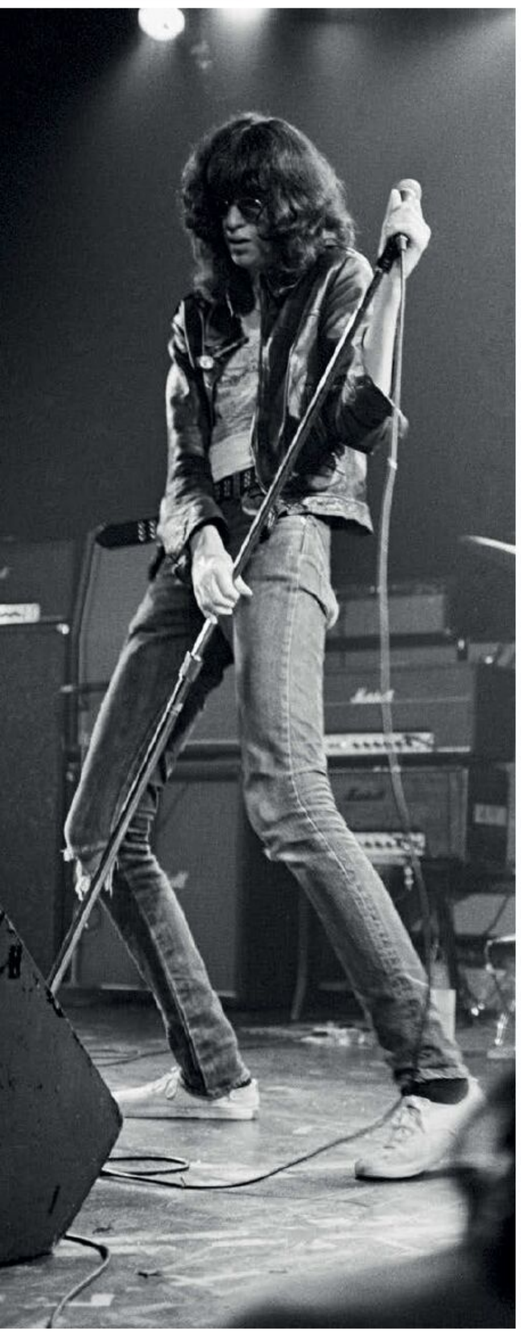
and at the same time more humorous, like Blondie and The Ramones. I have to say the LA bands were sort of contrived and limited by comparison. But I never gave a damn about what anyone was singing about, with the exception, again, of X. I've always been in it for the music, my earliest fave songs being instrumentals. I mean, 'New Rose'? Who knows or cares what the hell that is about, it's just an amazing, fierce piece of music.

SD!: You first saw The Damned support The Flamin' Groovies early on and snapped them countless times. How well did you get to know them? Any fun anecdotes?
DA: It was The Ramones, in fact, who opened for the Groovies at the Roxy, The Damned being a bit earlier at the Starwood. The Ramones ran through two or three songs in the time it took the unfortunate headliners to tune their 12-string guitars. I didn't meet The Damned until their second US tour, for *Machine Gun Etiquette*, at the Whisky. I've stayed friends with Rat and Dave since then, but I wouldn't want to delve into any personal anecdotes. I'm really glad they're back together in that form, with Paul Gray and Sensible.

SD!: The up close and personal live shots in your book *Shot In The Dark* are electric, but some of the outdoor images also tell an interesting tale. What are the stories behind Ian Dury at Bela Lugosi's house, and Stiv Bators beside Jim Morrison's Parisian resting place?
DA: I used to struggle with background settings in LA. It's a largely vacuous city. But I was aware of Bela Lugosi's former house, just above Sunset and convenient for the main venues and the hotels where bands stayed. I took Vanian up there once, predictably at night, but we could only do shots in front of a locked gate. Subsequently when I went back with Ian Dury, who had just opened for Lou Reed, and Kosmo Vinyl in the afternoon, it was wide open. So we just crept right in. Only briefly, though.

Stiv was more or less living in Paris with his girlfriend at that time and I would stay at their place occasionally. Seeking out Morrison's grave was a fairly predictable thing to do, especially as we were both Doors fans. We happened to go to Pere Lachaise at a very quiet time and there was no one about. We took photos of each other and Stiv took a bit of graveyard dirt and that was that. The only time I went back to that cemetery was to help carry Stiv to the crematorium, which was a terrible day.

SD!: You shot The Cramps often, including the cover of their 1980 debut *Songs The Lord Taught Us*. They really brought something different to music. Can you recall first meeting them and shooting them? Were you tuned into their influences?
DA: We first met briefly after one of their Whisky shows when they said they'd be happy for me to take some photos. When I turned up at the Tropicana as planned it was Ivy who answered the door, and she was quite intimidating because she was really quiet. I was a bit nervous initially, even though it wasn't warranted. Bryan was very soft-spoken, and he put me more at ease. Anyway, we had a perfectly nice time driving around and taking the odd photo. I always did like Link Wray, as did The Cramps of course, but wasn't that keen on rockabilly. When I worked at Peaches Records on Hollywood Boulevard. I'd phone Ivy for advice on which compilations to order for the shop. She really knew her stuff. (By the way, I only got that job because Stan Lynch had quit to play in Tom



John and Exene of X working on a poster; The Cramps' Ivy in Hollywood; Joey Ramone takes on LA; Dream Syndicate cool their feet

Petty's band.) I remember mentioning 'Boss' by The Rumblers to Ivy, as it's the riff in 'Garbageman', and she pretended not to know it. But she knew that I knew that she knew. I really miss her.

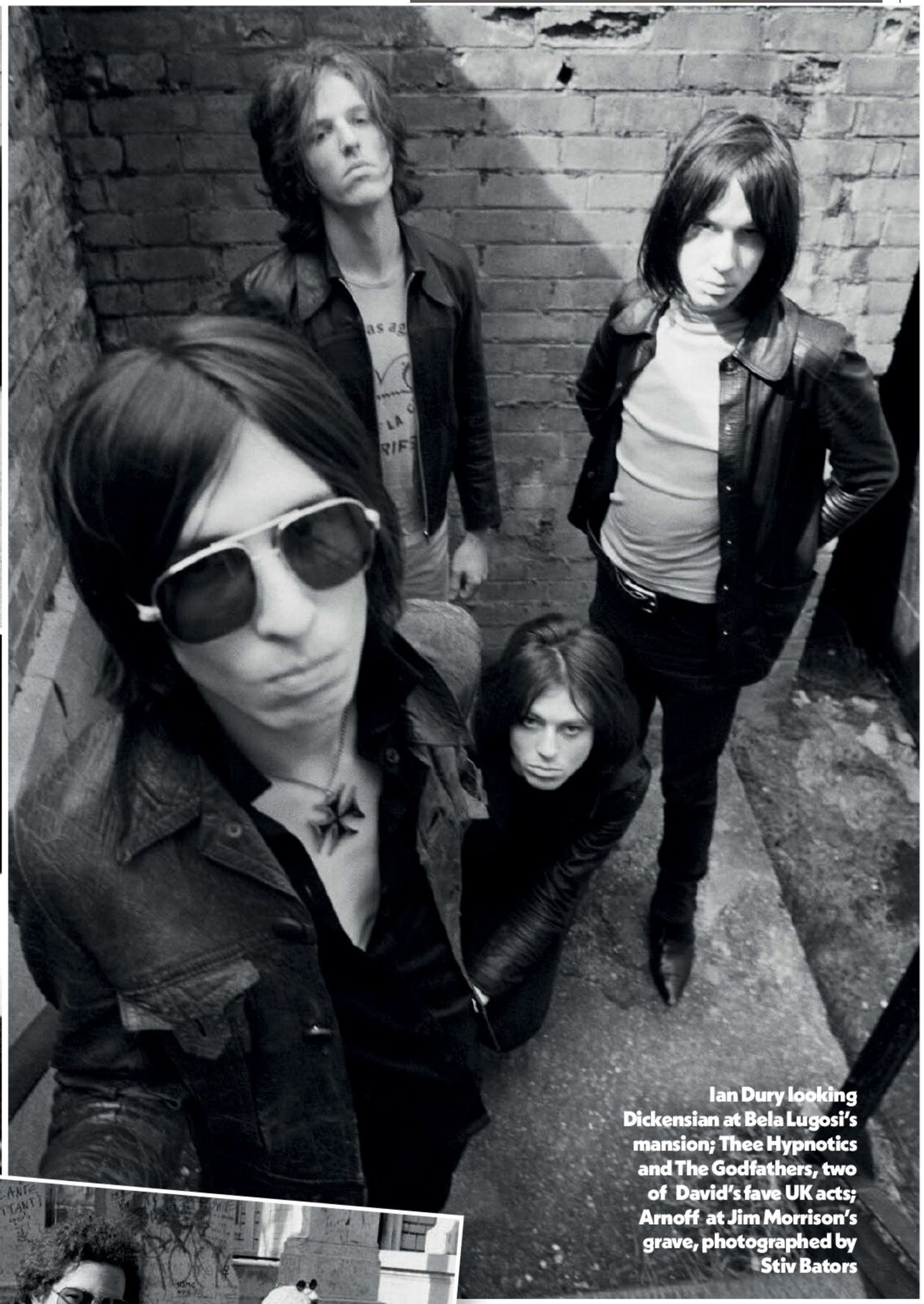
SD!: The early '80s post-punk era was fascinating regarding band's appearances. The Birthday Party's Rowland Howard for one. For every photogenic doomed matinee idol like Nick Cave or Lux Interior you had Howard and Devo. Who were some of your favourite oddballs to shoot?
DA: I don't know, weren't they all oddballs? But I never thought of them as such. Maybe John Cale?

SD!: You shot Dream Syndicate, what did you think of the other LA bands roped in to The Paisley Underground movement?
DA: The Dream Syndicate were head and shoulders above the rest of that scene. But The Rain Parade were pretty damn good as well, as were most of the bands who were under that banner: Salvation Army, Long Ryders. It was a welcome relief after the straitjacket of punk.

SD!: You never liked the LA sunshine, what was it that finally led you to to make the decision to move to London? In 1984 London was very different to now. How much of a culture-shock was it?
DA: I took to England the first time round in 1972, and stayed until my visa ran out. I felt totally at home here right from the start. The only culture shock was the transition from Cleveland to LA. When I was here on an extended holiday in '84 and staying with Stiv, he put my name on the door at The Electric Ballroom in Camden and I went off to see four bands I'd never heard of: The Scientists, Turkey Bones & The Wild Dogs, Flesh For Lulu and The Moodists. I loved every minute of it, especially The Scientists, who I'm still close friends with.

SD!: London in the mid-80s was awash with the rise of what would become gothic, along with the tail end of the early '80s psych revival, settling into the garage and trash scenes. The Fuzztones on tour with The Damned. The Scientists over from Oz, and smaller bands playing The Clarendon and various dives. What great bands did you see that you haven't had pictures published by, and what are your memories of the mentioned? The Damned, notably in their Naz Nomad & The Nighmares guise, were always close to '60s psych and garage.
DA: I was very impressed with New Model Army (although I didn't see them live), The Three Johns, Crime & The City Solution, Danielle Dax, and especially The Godfathers. Their gig in The London Dungeon was one of the best ever.

SD!: That scene grew and various tangents followed. There was the continued growth



Ian Dury looking Dickensian at Bela Lugosi's mansion; Thee Hypnotics and The Godfathers, two of David's fave UK acts; Arnoff at Jim Morrison's grave, photographed by Stiv Bators

of mod and rockabilly, what did you make of psychobilly, for instance? That clearly went back to The Cramps.

DA: Psychobilly? If you mean King Kurt and that lot, no thanks. I think they got the Cramps ethos completely wrong.

SD!: Garage-rock acts like Thee Michelle Gun Elephant continued and various smaller bands, like my old act The Nuthins, and various other bands featuring writers for this mag, The Thanes, The Beatpack etc, continued playing throughout the '90s, but I imagine grunge… baggy… didn't appeal. That scene grew and various tangents followed. Britpop… appealed far less to you.

DA: You're right there. Shoegazing and baggy were just as naff as their names imply. Absolutely limp. Whereas a killer band like Thee Hypnotics couldn't get a look-in, apart from in *Sounds*, not being on trend according to a very blinkered music press. A proper rock band had no chance, which goes for The Scientists, who were grunge before it was called that, and Thee Michelle Gun Elephant, as well as outliers like Gallon Drunk. God knows what the music journalists were thinking.

SD!: At the height of Britpop you presented a show on Xfm, rubbing shoulders with Ricky Gervais and future 6 Music broadcasters. How was the experience for you? Had you broadcast before? *Kick Out The Jams: The Story Of Xfm* was fascinating. What are some key memories of getting involved and the cast of characters.

DA: I'm afraid I didn't much rub shoulders with anyone at Xfm because mine was a late-night slot, apart from Jim Benner who was on just ahead of me. Some good writers came out of that station: Keith Cameron and Dave Keenan. But mainly I didn't click with these people, who were all younger than me and seemed to think music began with The Smiths. At one point we were all invited to a private press conference/acoustic gig by Patti Smith just down the road from the station. No one was the least bit interested apart from me. The others were career-minded but I fell into it more less by accident, being offered the job due to my record collection, in spite of my protestations and complete lack of experience. They treated me really well, though, and gave me complete free reign. Best job I ever had.

SD!: You have always worked in black & white, partly because you can print it yourself, and partly because in the '70s and '80s the weekly music press required it. Now it has a vintage charm and stylistic. It also suits your gothic, dark style. Have you, and would you ever, consider shooting a subject in colour? Have you ever taken snaps on an iPhone?

DA: Well, The Cramps cover was in colour, but as you say, I wasn't all that comfortable with it. I wanted to use a hand-coloured shot instead. But I have shot a bit of colour recently, and embarrassingly, also used my phone. This happened because I was offered a last-minute photo pass only to realise that my camera had actually seized up due to neglect. I've been pretty much retired for some time, and between that and COVID I also had lung cancer, so hadn't touched my camera for years. But the pass was for Miranda Sex Garden, a current favourite band, one of very few, including all of Katharine Blake's other projects, as well as The Fallen Leaves, Miraculous Mule and Jim Jones. But please don't call them "snaps". I put my heart and soul into these things. S!

Contributors: Chris Groom, Fiona McQuarrie, Jon 'Mojo' Mills, Phil Suggitt

Shot In The Dark: The Collected Photography Of David Arnoff is published by Red Planet

GREVIOUS ANGELS, TROUT MASKS AND AMERICAN BEAUTIES

In the early '70s, **GINNY WINN** became the first in-house staff photographer for Warner/Reprise Records in Burbank, California, when its roster included John Cale, Grateful Dead, Van Morrison, Maria Muldaur, Jimmy Webb, The Incredible String Band, Kate & Anna McGarrigle, Emmylou Harris, Gram Parsons, Captain Beefheart, Alice Cooper, Frank Zappa, Bonnie Raitt, Tim Buckley, Arlo Guthrie and Jackie DeShannon.

In this exclusive extract from an evocative new pictorial retrospective of her work, we revisit an era of unprecedented artist access and unguarded moments

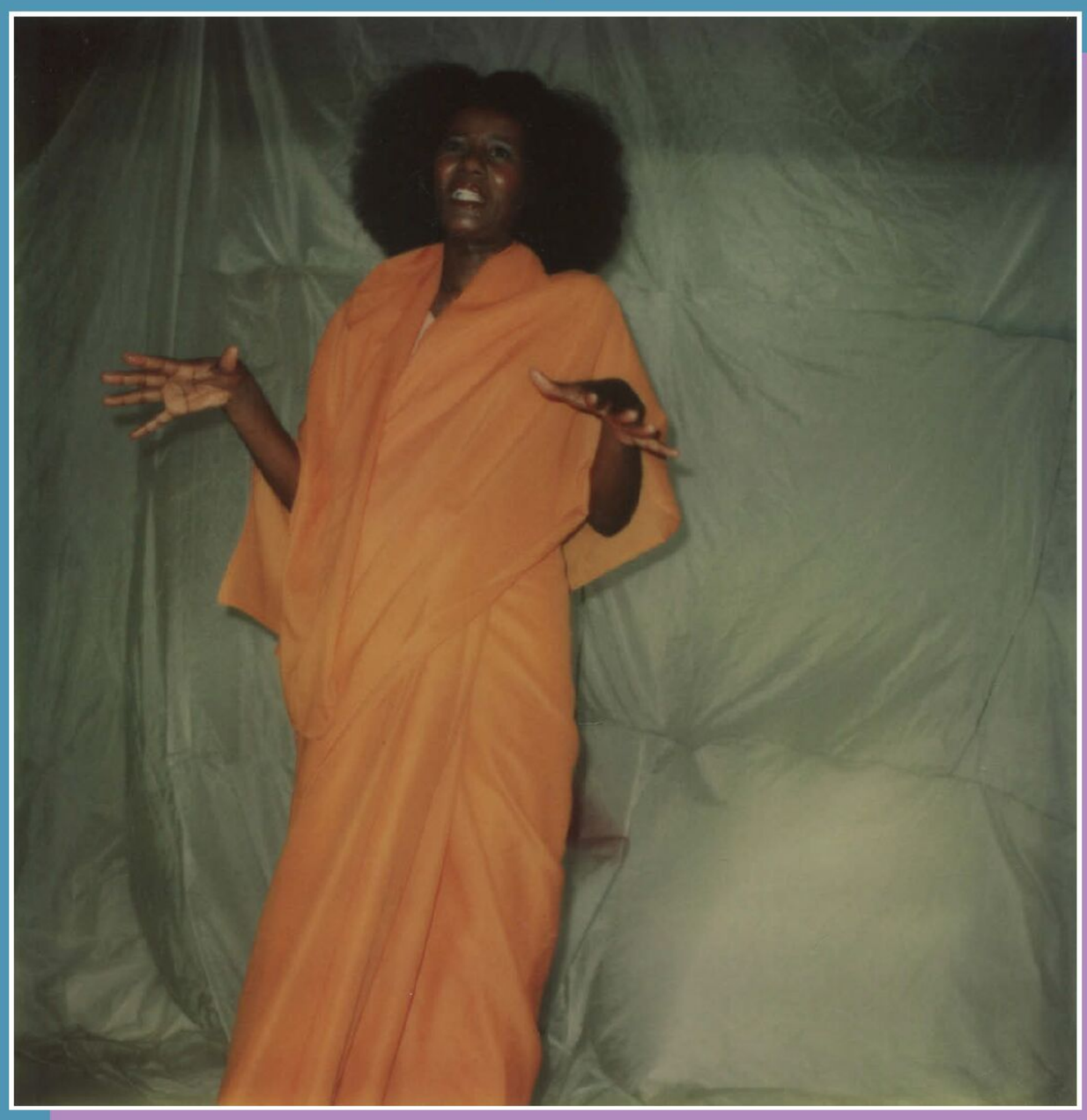
Ginny basking in the sun, New Orleans, late 1960s

ALL PHOTOS © GINNY WINN

"I spent a day with **Captain Beefheart**. Though a little leery in the beginning, he became a gracious and informative host as we toured the area around Eureka, near where he lived, and different places. I took a lot of pictures of him. The best thing was, at the end of the day, he took me to a little airport there, awaiting a small plane in this '50s coffee shop. I just took my camera, quietly trying to remain unobtrusive, and looked through the lens right at him. We remained relaxed and he just stared into the camera and let me take the shot. The camera was almost invisible, so it's completely natural. Just like that. That's the kind of thing that is so cool when it happens."

Gram Parsons. "I shot a lot of pictures of him. He was special. I felt a connection with the calm, positive, good side of him, when we were shooting photos. There was a calm that would happen, where you're just sitting shooting and you're comfortable. The camera becomes unintrusive. There is a trust."

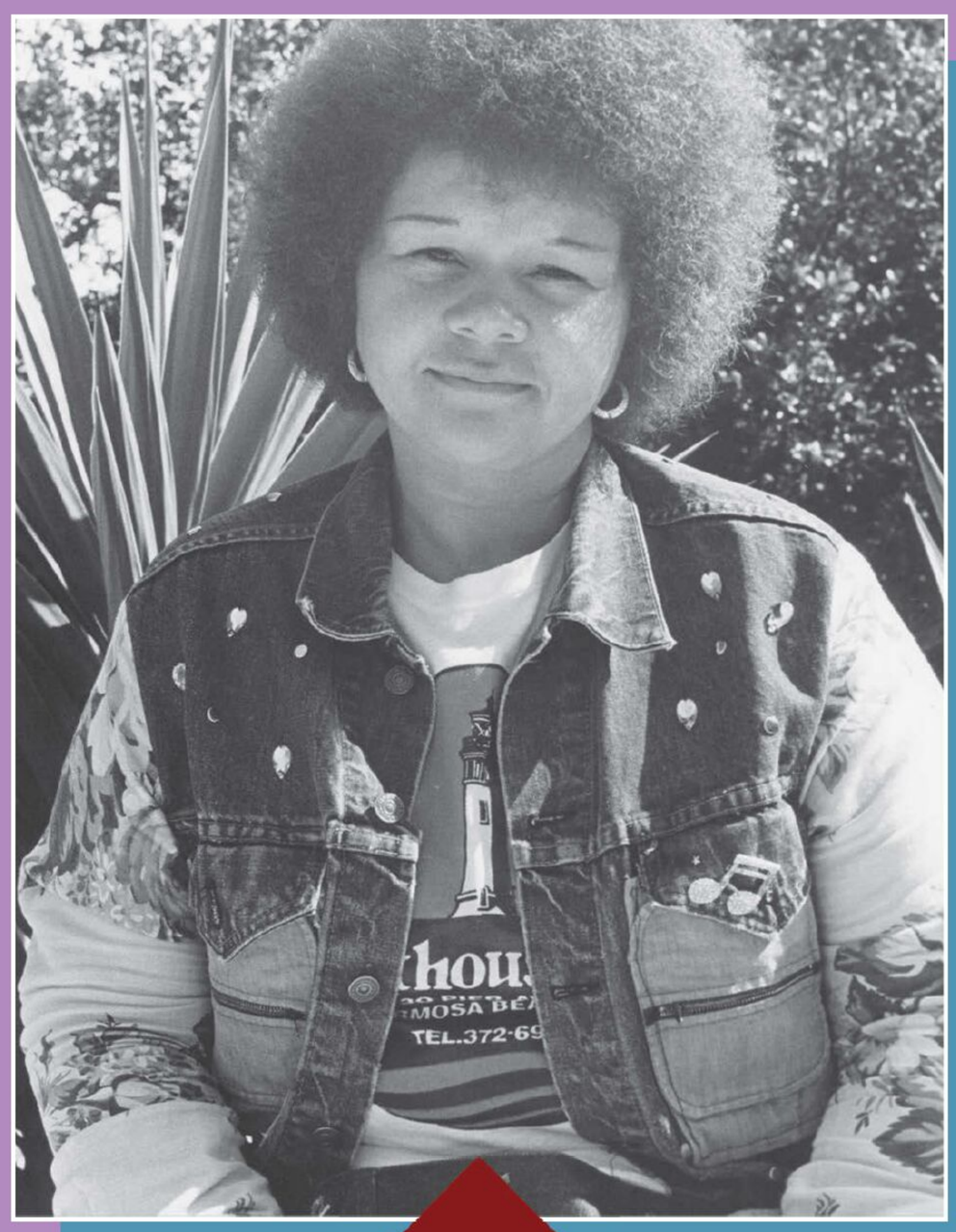
Supreme goddess **Alice Coltrane**, John's wife, and iconic in her own right for *Journey In Satchidananda* and other spiritual albums



Dr John. "I shot in the studio, but I met him a few times before. I loved his music. I did a lot of shots in the studio with him. People weren't usually allowed in there, but they were great to me about coming in the studio because I was careful about not stepping on any cords. I was good at getting around in the studio. I think it came into play that I had been a dancer and I'm an athlete so I can do the moves to not touch anything while focusing to get good pictures."

ALL PHOTOS © GINNY WINN

Jerry Garcia. "There was a bottle of liquid Owsley acid. Each of us had a drop. I'm shooting for Warner Brothers and I have a brand-new camera that I've never seen a roll of film from. And I had dropped the brand-new camera in the airport. But I encouraged myself to trust the process and get the shot; I had a kind of heightened awareness all day."

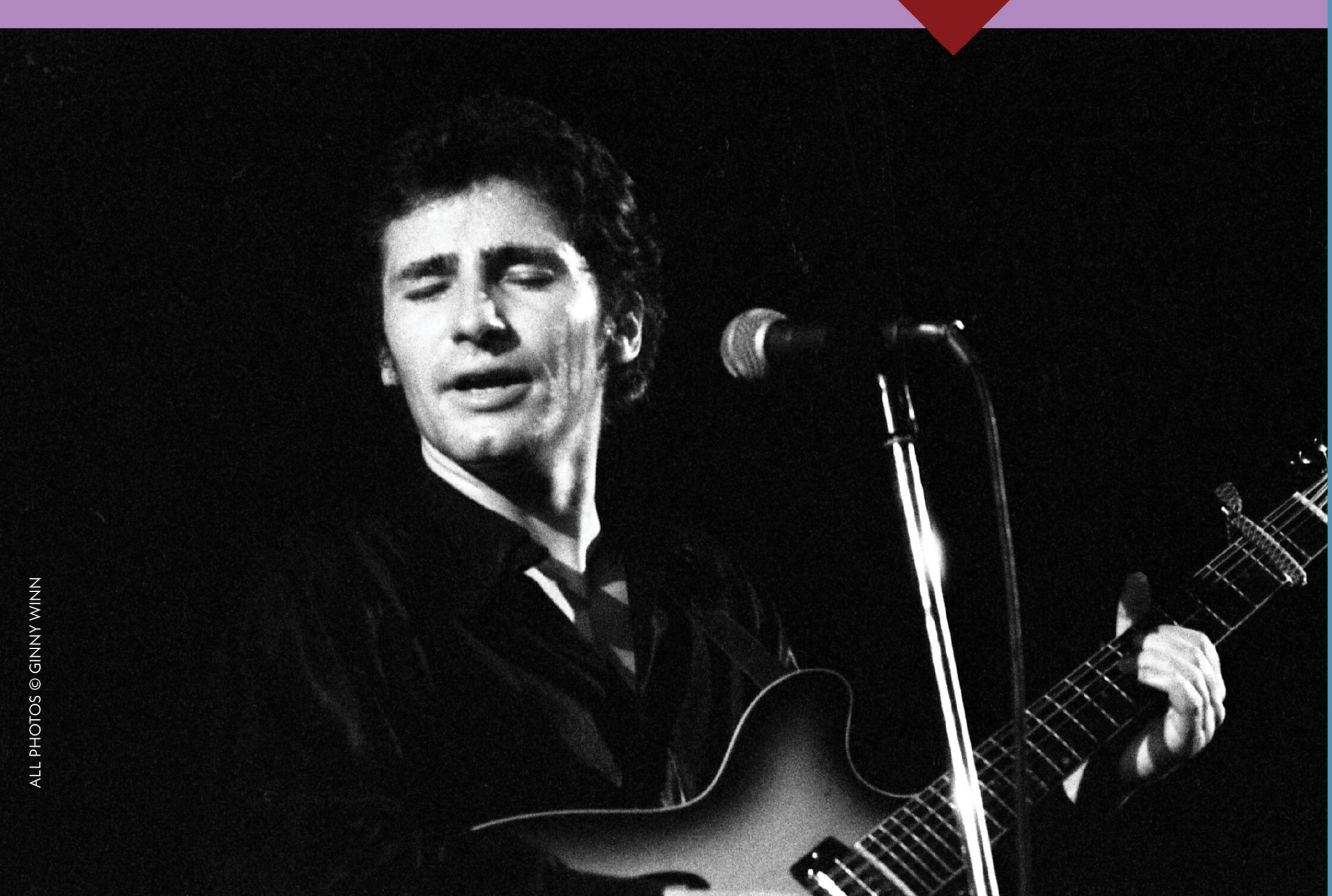


Etta James was inducted into The Rock & Roll Hall Of Fame in 1993. Afterwards she pronounced, "They got this shit backwards, it should be The R&B Hall Of Fame, where Blacks decide which white rockers deserve to get in."

Producer **Joe Boyd** and **Maria Muldaur**. Joe worked with Maria on 'Midnight At The Oasis', and he's known amongst Fairport Convention, Nick Drake and Richard & Linda Thompson fans for his mythological recordings with them

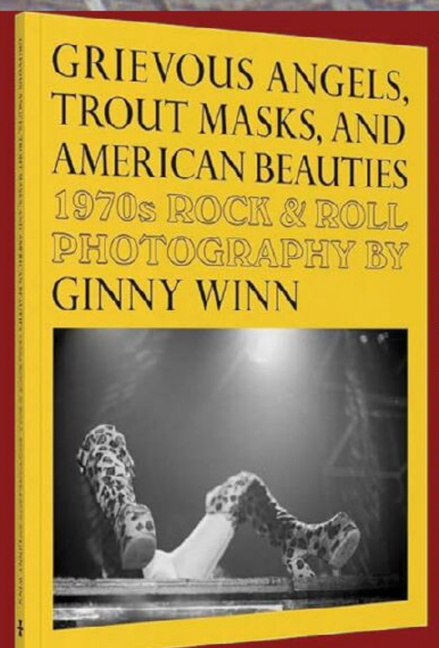
The Maxayn Group with Emilio Thomas, Andre Lewis, Maxayn Lewis and Hank Redd. They released three albums on Capricorn Records, which were distributed through Warner/Reprise

Singer/songwriter **Tim Buckley**, father of Jeff, known for incredible folk-rock albums such as *Goodbye And Hello*, the jazz-folk *Happy Sad*, and the avant-garde masterwork *Starsailor*



ALL PHOTOS © GINNY WINN

Bonnie Bramlett of Delaney & Bonnie and the first white Ikette with Ike & Tina Turner. She co-composed the songs 'Groupie (Superstar)' (a hit for The Carpenters), and 'Let It Rain' for Eric Clapton



With many thanks to Pat Thomas

Grievous Angels, Trout Masks, And American Beauties: 1970s Rock & Roll Photography By Ginny Winn is published by Fantagraphics

PSYCHEDE

"It seems like we became famous in two weeks." Sanullim in the early '80s. L-R: Kim Chang-ik, Kim Chang-wan, Kim Chang-hoon

LIFE SEOUL

SOUTH KOREAN ROCK BAND SANULLIM MAY HAVE ARRIVED LATE AT THE PARTY BUT THEY MORE THAN MADE UP FOR IT WITH THEIR BOUNDARY-BUSTING PSYCHEDELIC ROCK, ESTABLISHING A UNIQUE STRAIN OF K-POP AND FINDING ENORMOUS SUCCESS IN THE FACE OF POLITICAL TURMOIL AND GOVERNMENT OPPOSITION.

HUGH DELLAR TELLS THE TALE OF HOW THREE BROTHERS GROWING UP IN A MILITARY DICTATORSHIP PRODUCES A STRING OF ART BRUT CLASSICS... QUITE BY ACCIDENT

Sanullim – which you may also see written as Sanulrim or San Ul Lim, depending on how the original Korean band name of 산울림 is transliterated – was a remarkable trio made up of three siblings. The Kim brothers – Chang-wan, Chang-hoon and Chang-ik – were all born in the South Korean capital of Seoul within four years of each other – between 1954 and '58, the half-decade immediately after the end of The Korean War. The country they would come of age in was a gritty and relatively unsophisticated nation still racked by poverty and only a few years into the industrialisation programme that would later transform it forever. By the time they were in their teens, the Kims had started composing, despite not coming from a musical family. Chang-wan remembers the moment that would send his life spinning off on a hitherto unimaginable trajectory. "I didn't particularly care about or enjoy music when I was growing up. I first picked up a guitar when I was 17, right before the summer vacation of my freshman year of university. I actually bought it on the way to school – kind of by accident, really. I don't know if it was a coincidence or destiny of some kind, but there was a musical instrument store in front of the bus stop on my way to school. One of the guitars in the window caught my eye, so I walked into the store and bought this classical guitar with almost a month of wages from my part-time job at the time.

them and said they'd take us on. Of course, I was like, 'Thank you very much.'

I didn't know what to do or what to expect. I just went into the recording studio and played and recorded. After we finished recording, they told us that we needed to have our photos taken because the record would need a sleeve. We were too embarrassed to show our faces, so I drew the pictures on the front and designed all the lettering myself. We didn't find out until later that the record had been released and the songs were hits. To be honest, most of the songs on the first three albums were written when we were aged between 17 and 19 – our first and third years of university!"

The debut album featured a blistering fuzz guitar sound that bleeds in and out of the mix as well as what sounds like a tinny Farfisa set behind the sweetest of pop vocal melodies, and the nine tracks stretch out into strangely hypnotic diversions. It's easy to grasp how psych and garage heads coming to these tracks cold would find much to enjoy, and also simple to see how the recordings could be mistaken for something cut many years earlier. However, none of this was even remotely intentional.

"I didn't know anything," laughs Chang-wan, "so I didn't intentionally use effects or create a psychedelic sound in the way that fans and critics imagine I must've done. It was just something I did without thinking, without a plan. We needed an organ, so we asked my cousin Kim Nan-sook, who is a music major, to play the keyboards and that's how we ended up with that sound."

And what a sound it was. Kicking off with 'Oh, Already', a chugging fuzz-laden pop gem that suddenly takes off mid-song as the keyboards and guitar start drifting away before returning to the killer hook, you get three-quarters of an hour of

"I didn't even know how to strum it, so I bought a pitch pipe and a guitar book, and I carried the guitar home from school with me, and it changed my life. I've no idea what would have happened if I hadn't caught the bus to school from that place! When I got home, I immediately lined up the strings, grabbed a D chord, and started playing from the third beat, just like the book said. That's how I fell in love with the guitar, playing D chords for two hours. But the sound itself is so beautiful. I practiced guitar every day.

Then, about two months later, the older of my two younger brothers, Chang-hoon, also bought a second-hand guitar for him. At that time, he was in high school, and my little brother was in middle school. Anyway, I ended up playing the guitar, and Chang-ik didn't have anything, so he got hold of a book and a spoon and started banging on it. It was so much fun. I was very happy we could mess around together and make music, but I didn't know how to play any songs, or have any songs I really wanted to play, so I just made things up."

At college, the three formed a group called Mui and while they were at university, both Mui and middle brother Chang-hoon's other group Sand Pebbles did well in the annual MBC K-Pop festival. This gave them the impetus they needed to think more seriously about going pro. Bolstered by their successes, the trio sought out a music agency and then at the behest of their new manager, they changed their name to Sanullim, which means "Mountain Echo" in Korean.

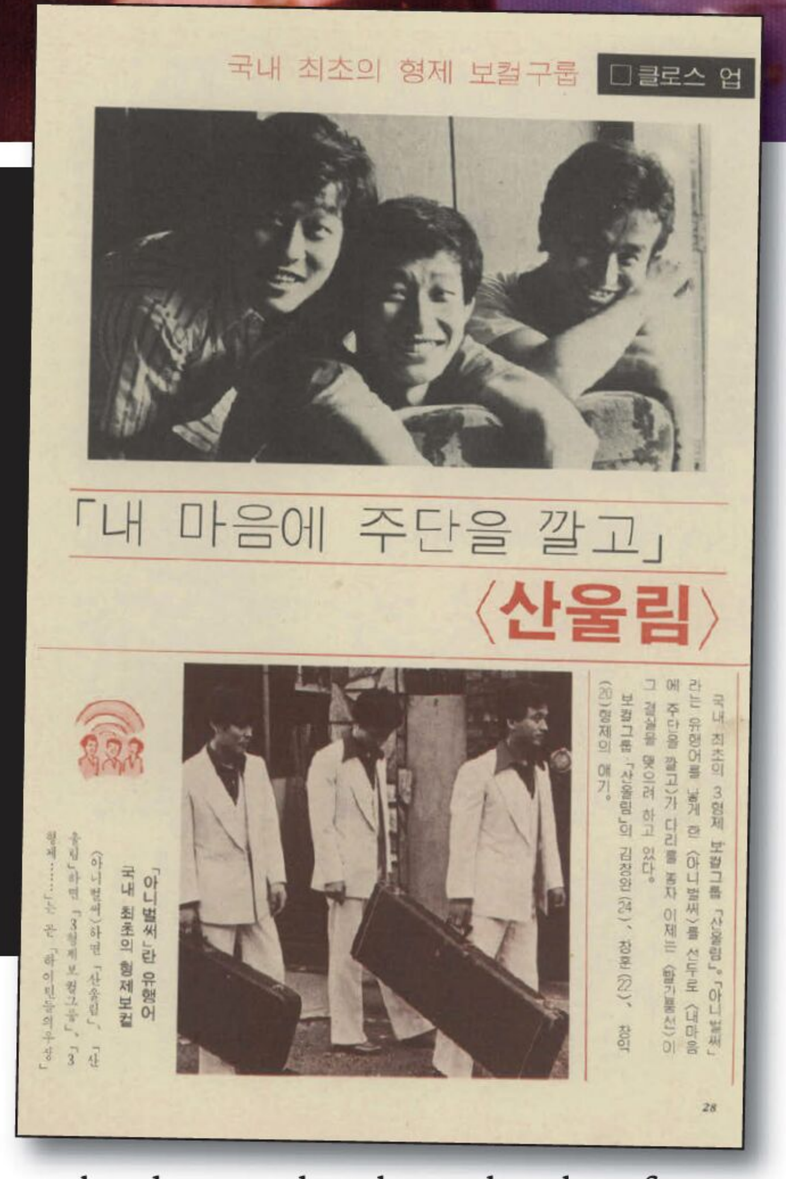
The music scene they were emerging into was one that had been all-but crushed by the military regime of Park Chung-hee, with several leading musicians like Shin Joong-hyun (founder of perhaps the first Korean rock group, Add4) having been busted for drug possession and many of the harder edged bands of the early '70s being seen as depraved enemies of the state. Other artists such as the folk-rock singer-songwriter and pioneer of Korean hippie culture Hahn Dae-soo ended up having their music banned and so went into self-imposed exile.

In '77, the year that the three Kim brothers saw Sanullim come to fruition, the US President Jimmy Carter announced his intention to withdraw all American troops from the country within five years, and it was in the midst of this turbulence that the remarkable music contained on their debut disc was made.

While the band deny that the political environment of the time shaped or impacted them in any way, the climate of internal political repression and paranoia nonetheless formed the perfect backdrop to the band's debut LP *Volume 1: Already Now*. The album had a seismic impact on its release in December '77. Whilst the UK was being rocked by the anger and wit and spit and pith of punk-rock, Sanullim operated in a different musical space, but still shocked in equal measure. This was all a huge surprise to the Kim brothers themselves, though.

"To begin with, we really weren't trying to be a band or to be professional musicians," recalls Chang-wan. "We were just having fun playing at home. I graduated in '77, so I had to figure out a career path and get a job, but we'd been writing a lot of songs and playing together for the last five or six years and were talking about making a compilation album at our own expense. We cut some demos and the record company heard

> "I WAS VERY HAPPY WE COULD MESS AROUND TOGETHER AND MAKE MUSIC, BUT I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO PLAY ANY SONGS, OR HAVE ANY SONGS I REALLY WANTED TO PLAY, SO I JUST MADE THINGS UP"


국내 최초의 형제 보컬구룹 □클로스 업

「내 마음에 주단을 깔고」

〈산울림〉

utterly idiosyncratic, intensely poetic music that seems both contained within its own odd little world and yet also very much in tune with what local listeners wanted. Chang-wan remembers how the record took the South Korean pop scene by storm. "It seems like we became famous in two weeks. Our songs were played on the streets, and we were inundated with requests for TV appearances. I heard later that the first album sold 400,000 copies. We didn't play many actual gigs, though – mainly university gigs, and I remember doing one solo performance at a cultural centre around the start of the '80s when my two younger brothers were doing military service, but that's about it."

Over the next 12 months, Sanullim released two more albums, both arriving in similarly opaque and cryptic sleeves and all partly named in a blank numerical manner. It's these first three LPs which have really led to a major retrospective reappraisal of the band among diggers, lovers of the exotic, obscure and unsung and just general enthusiasts of dreamy psych-pop with deep-fried edges.

The band's second album *Volume 2: Spread Silk On My Heart* was released within five months of *Volume 1* and again, it clocked in at around the 45-minute mark. If anything, the fuzz pedals were set to an even more intense level of stun than they were on its predecessor. The opening title track starts with 180 seconds of brutal, grinding instrumental groove built around a minimal endlessly repeated bass riff and overlaid with guitar bleed. Elsewhere, you get a slew of insanely catchy hook-laden choruses sung over swirling, brooding sound stews and guitar meltdown pitched somewhere between prime Hawkwind and Terry Brooks & The Strange!

Volume 3: My Heart (My Soul Is A Wasteland) appeared half a year later. This time, whilst the fuzz guitar and strangely basic bass and drum patterns remains, it's the frequently gruff, howling vocals that are the most noticeably different element of the sound. There are also extended slow burners that sizzle and spit as they slide towards the eight-minute mark as well as some frenetic dancefloor groovers thrown in for good measure as well.

While this early burst of creativity has been well documented and much praised, what's far less known – is the fact that the band continued in the same prolific vein for many years to come, putting out a jaw-dropping 17 LPs over the next decade – and there are odd gems to be found right the way through.

For instance, the opening title track from '79's *Volume 4: Express Train* blends howling vocals right on the edge of hysteria with insane sludge guitar and what could almost be Philly soul drum fills. Other tracks from the same album are equally idiosyncratic. With its odd mix of searing fuzz, overlapping discordant vocals and broken funk rhythms, 'Chameleon' sounds like a New York no-Wave band rehearsing next door to a garage combo; 'The Next Day And The Next' starts with more howling guitar before quickly changing into a minor key ballad, albeit one that closes with yet more scuzzy lead lines, while the elegant instrumental 'The Windy Hill By The River' actually helps makes sense of the fact that the whole record was actually recorded as background music and insert songs for TV and radio dramas, making it to all intents and purposes a sort of library album.

Also from '79 was an LP that seems to translate as "Mischievous" or "Naughty" and any complacent listeners are shaken out of their reveries by the bolt of energy that is 'Naughty Boy' – a short, sharp pop shock with another evil solo that shreds all the way through mid-song. Other tracks from this release like 'Evening Breeze', 'Dear Friend' and 'Night

FIVE LOST KOREAN GEMS

THE PEARL SISTERS
A CUP OF COFFEE (1968)

The Pearl Sisters were real siblings – and the music that Bae In Soon and Bae In Sook made in the late '60s and early '70s broke the mould. While a lot of contemporary South Korean sounds were almost dementedly upbeat, their sound was far more melancholy and had a twisted, slightly-delic edge. As well as covering popular US and UK hits of the day (check out their charming primitive version of The Zombies' 'I Love You'), they did tracks like this one – a plaintive keening cut that manages to combine slow-bleed fuzz guitars with what sounds like lovelorn harmony vocals.

THE KEY BOYS
MY LOVE IS DISTANT (1969)

The Key Boys started out playing to American GIs stationed in South Korea and soon got a reputation for being such a devastating live act that the tag of "The Korean Yardbirds" attached itself to them. They recorded prolifically and put out everything from tepid covers of American hits to fuzzy freakouts. This track is taken from their rather optimistically titled fifth LP *Key Boys' Soul & Psychedelic Sound,* and perfectly captures the odd mix of crazy overdriven guitars and sweet vocals found on so many local records of the era. There's also the familiar basic Farfisa pumping away in the background for good measure.

LEE JUNG HWA
I DON'T LIKE (1970)

Bursting onto a rather unsuspecting South Korean pop scene with her 1967 LP *The Psychedelic Sound* (which, whilst interesting, isn't psychedelic in any sense that western listeners would generally understand), Lee Jung Hwa was backed by the aforementioned Shun Joong Hyun and his band The Donkeys on many of her early recordings. On these understated productions, this led to the strange juxtaposition of her seductive nightclub voice over raw guitar lines. This cut starts off like '96 Tears' on downers before growing into a deep Korean soul ballad of sorts with great strings and backing vocals and the obligatory three-note organ solo.

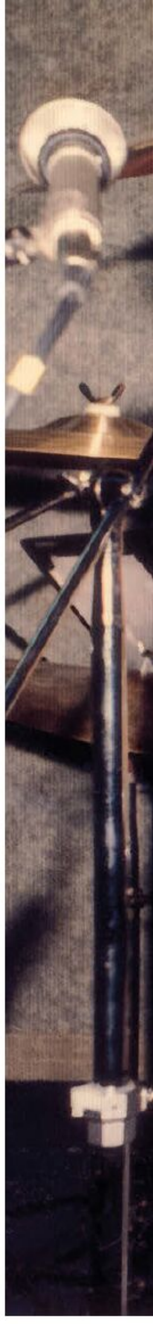
HE6
RUNNING MAN (1971)

Originally part of the mid-60s beat band boom playing what was known as "Group Sound" in South Korea (and Japan, as it happens), He 6 was made up of six guys and if you're noticing a certain literalism in many of the names of things here, you won't be surprised to learn that their first two LPs were given the catchy titles of *Volume 1* and *Volume 2*. Notice a pattern developing here? This insane nine-minute epic is taken from the wonderfully titled *Go Go Sound '71*, and the mind boggles at how caged dancers might've moved to this monstrous psychedelic funk workout, especially the three-minute mid-song breakdown drum freakout.

SHIN JOONG HYUN
PUSHING THROUGH THE FOG (1972)

A legend in his homeland, Joong Hyun formed one of South Korea's very first rock 'n' roll bands, Add4, in 1962 and was then at the forefront of the nascent psychedelic rock scene that flourished at the turn of the decade. He went on to write his most famous song, 'Beautiful Rivers And Mountains', in protest of the military dictatorship of Park Chung Hee and was later imprisoned and tortured by the regime, while his music was banned until the '80s. This cut is all brooding, eerie floating and menace, with a strange Middle Eastern refrain appearing out of the murk every now and then.

Hugh Dellar



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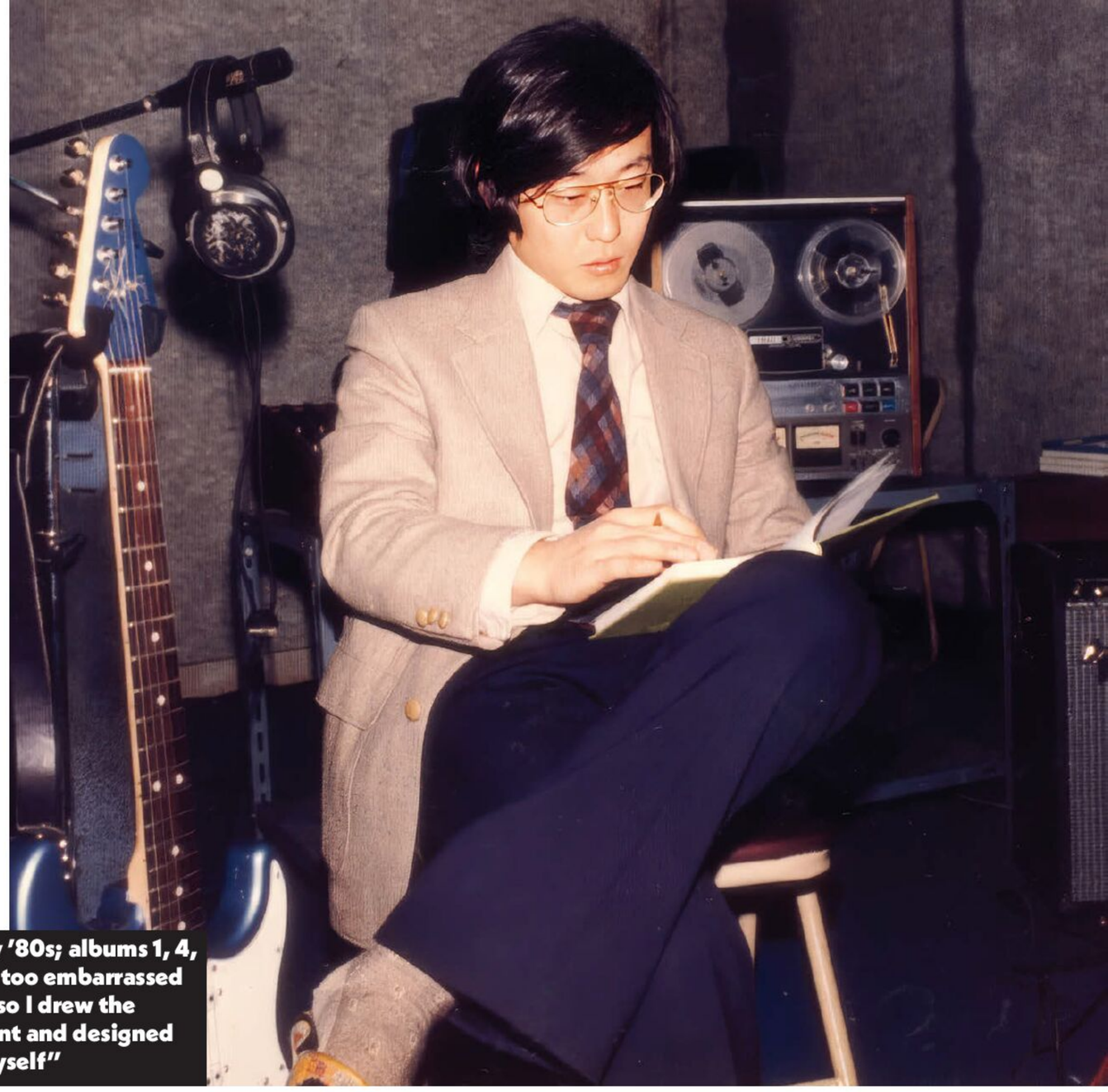
Journey' never quite reach the same levels of intensity, but all zip along at a fair old tempo and contain furious fuzzy freak-outs a-plenty.

As the '70s gave way to the '80s, South Korea lurched from crisis to crisis. In '79, the year that the band released its fourth and fifth LPs, Park Chung-Hee, the military dictator who had ruled since '62, was assassinated over dinner by members of The Korean Central Intelligence Agency. By the end of the year, he'd been replaced by another military dictator, Chun Doo-Hwan, who brought in a series of draconian and increasingly authoritarian measures to tighten his grip on power. It was against this chaotic backdrop that the band continued to make some remarkable music.

In a weird moment of numerical synchronicity, their fifth LP, *Volume 5: Daytime Hourglass*, came out just five short months after the fourth, and it shares with the third LP the distinction of featuring the highest number of songs written by middle brother Kim Chang-hoon. The title track shows the guitars playing a far less ferocious role and a more distinctly Korean sound starting to emerge, though on 'Pathway' the fuzz makes occasional reappearances, now competing with swirling synth washes and rather flat sounding drums. The sprawling trance-out of 'Let's Go To The Vineyard' again sounds cleaner, sparser and more rooted in the era's proficient progressive sounds. 'A Portrait Of A Lady Shaman' begins with almost a minute of primal and rather primitive drum kit battery before it roars into a riff-tastic pounding heavy-rock cut overlaid with piercing high-pitched vocals that grinds ever onwards for the next five minutes, before the whacked-out and predominantly instrumental 'White Porcelain' somehow merges a sort of alien disco beat with insane drifting fuzz leads and what could almost be bagpipes to create a truly singular genre-defying melange of sounds.

By the time the band were ready to cut the next album (titled– yep, you guessed it – *Volume 6: Wait A Little Longer*) the two youngest brothers were doing military service, so Chang-wan roped in musicians



In the studio, early '80s; albums 1, 4, 5 and 9. "We were too embarrassed to show our faces, so I drew the pictures on the front and designed all the lettering myself"

from another group that went by the rather wonderful name of Broken Spaceship. Released in May '80, the disc features 'Red Balloon', not the Tim Hardin song, but an original. With its production sheen and synthetic squelches, it again signals the softer sounds already hinted at… until yet another fierce fuzz solo suddenly erupts mid-song before vanishing as fast as it appeared. 'Teacup' is a pleasant if less memorable acoustic ballad, while the far more haunting 'Afternoon' is another predominantly acoustic cut that comes steeped in a sense of dreamy nostalgia but is also intercut with bursts of radio noise and what sounds like someone smoking and drinking!

Volume 7: Don't Go came out in the summer of '81 and the title track is pinned down by an eccentric walking bassline over which huge slashing chords weave in and out and the vocal veers between desperation and seduction. The utterly bonkers 'Come By The Window' from the same LP starts in a bizarre meandering abstract manner reminiscent of Jandek before morphing something more akin to prime 'Blockbuster' Sweet! With its monstrous Sabbath-esque fuzz riff and backwards effects, 'Dreaming Doll' also suggests that this album was a return to the heavier crunch of days gone by, and again the ever so slightly off

로 시도되는 「음악 詩劇」
「한여름밤의 축제」공연
연극

vocals add an endearing DIY touch.

There was no let up to the prodigious output and the title track of '82's *Volume 8: Flying Bird* is another mad mix of indie-funk, hard-rock, trad Korean themes and almost punk-like vocals in places, whilst 'A Strange Day Like Today' is all scratchy guitars and disco cymbals, Golden Cups-style bass runs and odd breakdowns. 'There' from '83's fittingly titled *Volume 9: Want To Keep It As A Smiling Memory* is something else altogether. Imagine Neil Young and Television on a collision course somewhere near the Korean DMZ and you'll be close.

By the mid-80s, the two younger brothers had had enough and quit the group to pursue civilian careers, leaving Kim Chang-wan to soldier on with pick-up musicians for two more decades, cutting several more albums over the years. In the '90s, the boom in K-Pop prompted a reconsideration of the country's musical past, and all the band's LPs were reissued, with a tribute LP also appearing. Sanullim performed in Seoul in July 2007 as part of their 30th anniversary celebrations and planned to release a *Volume 14* album.

However, in January 2008 drummer Kim Chang-ik was killed in a traffic accident while driving a forklift truck in heavy snow in British Columbia, Canada, prompting Kim Chang-wan to dissolve the band and call it a day. He then went on to perform as a musician, actor, writer and media celebrity, taking a lead role in the hit medical drama *White Tower* and a supporting role in the romantic comedy *Coffee Prince*. His younger brother Chang-hoon now lives in Los Angeles with his family. S!

Volumes 4 to 9 are out now on Guerssen

THE WORLD AT THEIR FINGERTIPS

SPIRIT may not have achieved the commercial success of The Doors or attained the fanatical cult following of Love, but the four albums the LA quintet cut between 1967 and '70 remain pinnacles of the original underground rock era. The fourth, ***TWELVE DREAMS OF DR SARDONICUS***, is widely regarded as a classic – a phantasmagorical psychedelic sunset overflowing with bravura performances, tightly structured songwriting, prescient social commentary and wildly inventive production flourishes. No mean feat considering the group fractured during the album's creation – torn apart by drugs, egos, communication breakdowns, musical differences and a near-fatal accident. It found little in the way of an audience in 1970, before going gold six years later.

ANDY MORTEN stitches together eyewitness accounts to tell the story.

Portrait by **IRA COHEN**

"The band went into this project with a straightforward agenda: to record the best songs we had and record them cleanly with great sounds and let whatever concept develop naturally on its own" MARK ANDES

Spirit photographed in Ira Cohen's Mylar Chamber, New York, summer 1970

Mark Andes, Ed Cassidy, John Locke, Jay Ferguson and Randy California on stage, late 1968

Randy California (vocals, guitar) to Ian MacDonald, *New Musical Express*, April 1973: It started out with us wanting to make a concept album. The only problem was no-one could think of a concept.

Jay Ferguson (vocals, percussion) to *Dark Star* magazine, 1978: I brought the name of the album to the band, I guess I was responsible. There's a grade D movie in the US, just a very cheap shot, called *Dr Sardonicus* (actually *Mr Sardonicus*, William Castle, 1961). He lived in a basement and his thing was that his face had frozen to this ghostly grin, this horrifying grin. Anyway, I liked that name and when we were recording the album, somehow it turned into *Twelve Dreams* because I wanted to conceptualise the record in the title without making it too rigid. We did wanna make a concept album, but the name is a bit of a cheat because it hints to the record buyer that "Here's a concept album," You can sort of follow it in that way because the songs go into one another, but there's no great message in it.

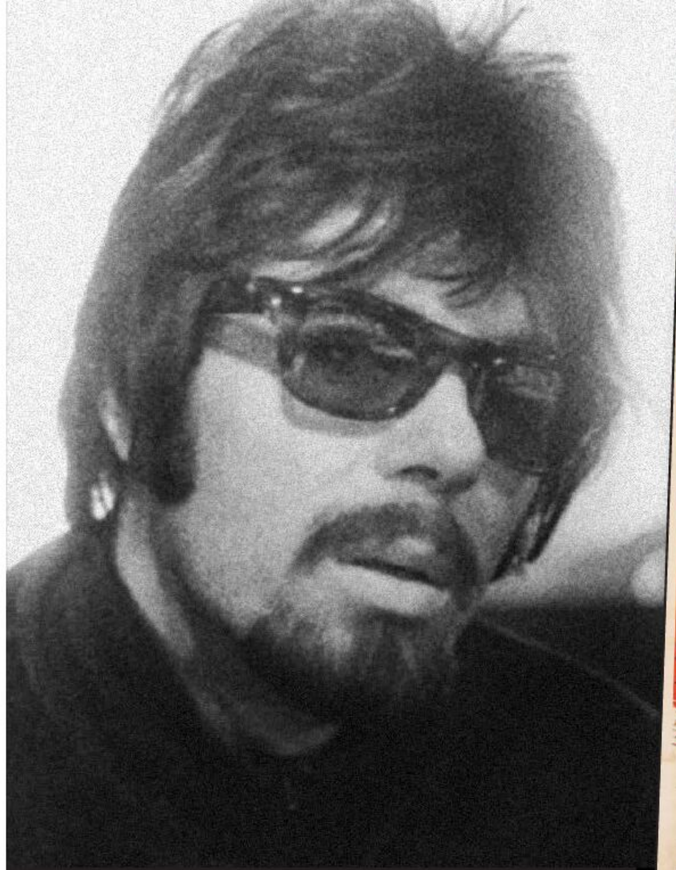
RC to Max Bell, *New Musical Express*, October 1976: We had moderate success, got a few bucks off the hit single 'I Got A Line On You'. We thought [Lou] Adler [producer of Spirit's first three albums] could make us some bread. Unfortunately, he took away our publishing for five years. He still owns it on 'Nature's Way' and all those good songs up to 1972.

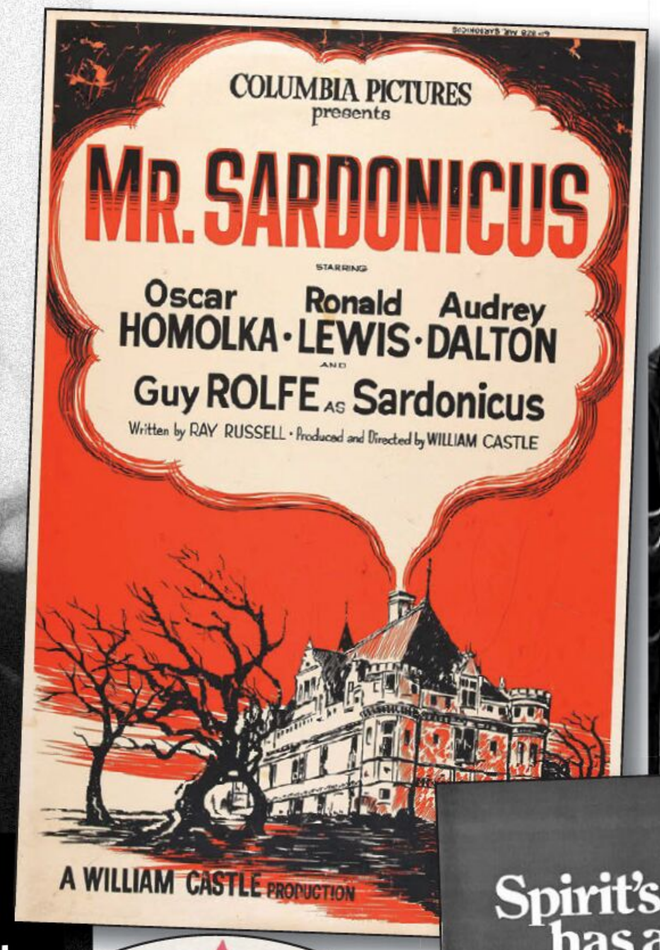
Mark Andes (bass) to It's Psychedelic Baby, June 2018: The *Twelve Dreams Of Dr Sardonicus* record is what I consider to be Randy's masterwork. The band went into that project with a straightforward agenda: to record the best songs we had and record them cleanly with great sounds and let whatever concept develop naturally on its own. David Briggs, our friend and neighbour from Topanga Canyon, was brought in as producer. David had produced Neil Young, another friend and neighbour, so we felt we were in good hands. There was a good, relaxed feeling as we cut the tracks. Randy really blossomed creatively. Jay and John had wonderful songs, but Randy took the lead with John and David and created segues and used special effects and the "concept" began to appear.

Nils Lofgren (guitar, Grin/Neil Young) to Chris Briggs, *ZigZag*, December 1973: I was at those Spirit sessions. They're all living in Topanga Canyon doing this album and David's an old friend of theirs, so they hit him to go along and help. I was living with him when he was working on that album, and he worked so hard and long helping those guys. They say he only sat there, but they only sat there playing guitar or whatever. He did all the engineering on that album. If he hadn't been there the record wouldn't have sounded as good as it did. David's got a lot of desire and he's very intense. He never tells you what to play, so if you don't know, there are going to be problems. If he'd have told Randy how to play guitar he would've said, "No thanks." He was doing them a favour as a friend. No contracts or anything.

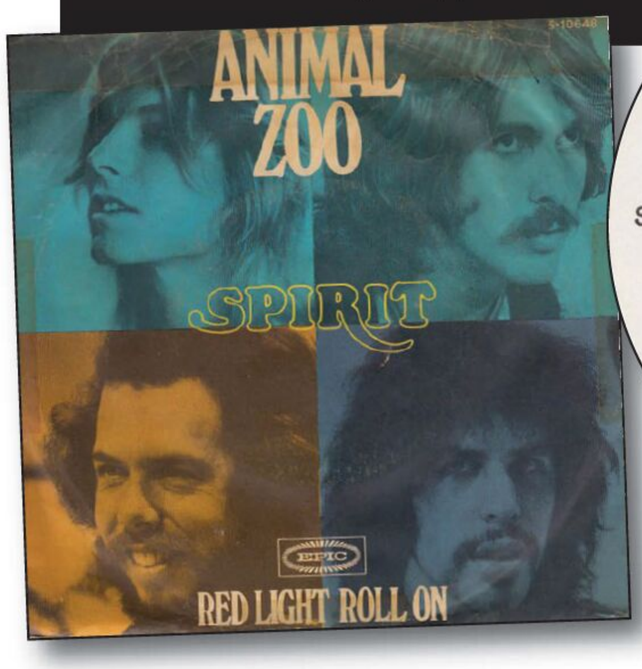
MA for the 1996 reissue of *Twelve Dreams Of Dr Sardonicus*: David really let the band produce the album and that was excellent for us. John [Locke] had a big hand in the production with all the little vignettes and segues.

RC for the 1996 reissue: During the five months we took recording *Twelve Dreams*, David became the sixth member of the band. David inspired and guided us to our very best studio performances. I will always remember him for his quick wit, no-nonsense decisions, and brotherly disposition. The album could not have happened without David and I cherish the memories of our time together.





"If he hadn't been there the record wouldn't have sounded as good as it did." ***Sardonicus*** **producer David Briggs; cinematic inspiration; the fabulous furry freak brothers, 1969; 'Animal Zoo' and 'Nature's Way' 45s; press ads**



MA to Johnny Black, *MOJO*, February 2004: I loved working with David on *Twelve Dreams*. I mean, aside from him fucking my girlfriend…

MA for the 2022 reissue: There were factions in the band. There were the paranoid views of Bernice (Randy's mother), Cass and Randy. They hated Lou Adler and he hated them. Then there was Jay and me. John was in the middle. It was pretty dysfunctional.

RC to Max Bell, *New Musical Express*, October 1976: The whole time there was a rift between me and Jay Ferguson. Jimi [Hendrix] instilled freedom and spontaneity in me – we were loose but it was electric. Jay wanted tight, controlled sets. He didn't do anything except sing on Spirit albums either. People think he played rhythm guitar but that was me, though I have to say he did write good lyrics – 'Mr Skin', 'Animal Zoo' – we still do 'em.

JF to *Dark Star*, 1978: Yeah, it started to splinter at that point. I remember up 'til then, Lou Adler had been the rallying point – he'd settle the arguments and suddenly he was gone and we were by ourselves and everything kinda came out. Randy wanted his things his way and I wanted my things my way. There were quite a lot of fights, but there was co-operation to the point where we got the record done and there were a lot of good ideas. I remember Randy came up with some great ideas for my songs and I think I tried to help his too.

> "The whole time there was a rift between me and Jay Ferguson. Jimi [Hendrix] instilled freedom and spontaneity in me – we were loose but it was electric. Jay wanted tight, controlled sets"
> RANDY CALIFORNIA

JF for the 1996 reissue: There was always the question of, "Would the centre hold?" in Spirit – musically, because we were all pulling in different directions, then politically.

MA to Kris Needs, *Record Collector*, May 2018: Jay and I had a vision of how this album should come out, but Randy, John Locke and David Briggs would go into the studio alone and we weren't really involved after we recorded our tracks. When we heard the final album, I thought, "This is so over-produced, it's not my vision of how I wanted this to be." I wanted it to be more pared-down. In retrospect, it's a brilliant record – the best, most important record Spirit ever did – but at the time it created a kind of wedge issue because of the conflicts and frictions.

JF to *Dark Star*, 1978: There weren't a lot of arguments as much as people stopped listening to other people's ideas. For instance, when we did 'Nature's Way', Randy really didn't want to hear about any of my ideas for that song. He had a set pattern, and it turned out he was right because that's a great cut. But it was insulting to me, I felt left out. It was probably the same way with him – we began losing trust in each other. It was just a bad time. He and I were strong personalities, both creative, and both overly sensitive about that – and probably acting a lot like children.

RC to Ian MacDonald, *New Musical Express*, April 1973: Jay and Mark are really dull people, you know? They're afraid to take steps. While we were working on this album, I swore I'd never do another one with Jay. I was working real hard on the whole project. I spent an entire day doing those slide things on 'Nothing To Hide'. (Randy later stated that it was actually Mark's brother Matt Andes who played the national steel guitar parts). It was really important to me. You know 'Love Has Found A Way'? Well,

Spirit subject themselves to "this crazy photographer ", Ira Cohen (right)

that started out as a little jazz instrumental written by the group – and then I saw what it could be and went in and overdubbed vocals and backwards tapes. That's my favourite track on the album.

JF for the 1996 reissue: 'Animal Zoo' is a semi-Darwinian spin on the whole "we are ruining the world with pollution" ethos, which began with 'Fresh Garbage'. We humans had grown "much too fat and a little too long" to survive. We needed to rejoin the rest of the zoo. 'Mr Skin' was a nickname for Cass – no hair on that head, just skin. Of course, certain people have seen it as a metaphor for a certain body part. Essentially, it's a tongue-in-cheek song about sexualised culture. I really like 'Mr Skin'. It was one of those things that fell together and felt right as a whole piece. We had a great groove and had some of the best horn players in LA come in.

RC for the 1996 reissue: For 'Street Worm' I tried to make my guitar sound like a saxophone. 'Life Has Just Begun' became a real group effort with everyone putting in a piece of the puzzle until, by magic, it was complete. Kiowa is the name of an Indian clan and a beautiful horse in Topanga.

JF for the 1996 reissue: The shining star on that album is 'Nature's Way'. It's kinda sad because I wasn't a part of that recording; it was done with Randy and Cass and David Briggs, just the three of them. It's a great, soulful, always pertinent song. Some of the songs were total group efforts and some – more Randy's and John's – were recorded in a more fragmented fashion and only finished when Mark and I added our parts.

> "Certain people have seen 'Mr Skin' as a metaphor for a certain body part. Essentially, it's a tongue-in-cheek song about sexualised culture"
> JAY FERGUSON

MA to Louder Sound, February 2020: Randy blossomed as the main writer, but Jay and I felt disenfranchised in the process, like the project got hijacked from us. Randy and John and David were going off in their own direction. You could see cracks in the veneer starting to appear.

JF to *Dark Star*, 1978: Then we went to New York and found this crazy photographer (Ira Cohen) who'd just come back from whirling like a Dervish in Tunisia for six months and we shot the cover shots and soon it became very dreamlike.

RC to *Guitar* magazine: There was something else with us in the studio for the recording of *Sardonicus* that made that thing extra magical.

JF to Johnny Black, *MOJO*, February 2004: It was the first time I'd ever seen cocaine in a studio. I'm not attributing it to any band member or technician or anybody, but it was there. Psychedelics were giving way to this new, harder thing. Randy, I think, had gone beyond recreational drug use into a more serious side of it. That certainly contributed to the moodiness and the lack of communication.

MA to Louder Sound, February 2020: What really made things dramatic was Randy's accident. He fell off a horse, which he was riding on a paved street. Fell and fractured his skull, got concussion. Anyway, he didn't follow doctor's orders, and we were all doing a lot of drugs and

On the road in 1970. "I remember a sense of finality"; May '70 Fillmore West show

psychedelics. And a lot of coke back then. A *lot*. So it was a highly charged time, and I'm not sure Randy's wiring came back altogether. So not only was there all this drama, but we happened to be making a fucking brilliant record! One of those peak energy things, I guess…

MA to It's Psychedelic Baby, June 2018: The recovery took place during the recording and Randy didn't exactly follow doctor's orders and continued to medicate himself. Somewhere along the line, Jay and I felt left out of the mix.

JF to Johnny Black, *MOJO*, February 2004: We were sitting around with time on our hands. Mark and I were jamming with his brother Matt and speculating about what kind of band it might be fun to be in because, at that time, Spirit was not fun.

JF for the 1996 reissue: We were fighting, we weren't hanging out. There was no daylight, all the moves became painful.

JF to *Dark Star*, 1978: We finished the album, the album came out, did terribly in the charts, looked like our biggest burn yet, went on tour, did some dates. It seemed like excitement for the band was waning, had some giant fights on the road – one in particular over a tour of Japan which Randy cancelled just because he didn't want go, on the eve of departure.

MA to Johnny Black, *MOJO*, February 2004: We had our bags packed. We had our passports, our tickets, we had our fucking per diems, and then Randy decides he's not going. I knew right then we were in trouble.

JF to Johnny Black, *MOJO*, February 2004: Trying to fathom the mind of Randy California… It could have been that he had a dream or a premonition that something bad would happen, and he would act on something like that.

RC to Max Bell, *New Musical Express*, October 1976: When I got back from hospital it was over. Al Staehely had been brought in as bassist. I shouldn't mention his name 'cos I don't like him... he's from Texas. He came in saying, "Hell we're gonna make it better than Spirit ever was," so I said, "Fuck it" and left.

JF to Johnny Black, *MOJO*, February 2004: It (Spirit's last two dates at The Fillmore East in New York on 29th-30th January 1971) was more whimper than bang. I remember a sense of finality because we all knew. It was sad, because I'd seen the band lose some of its lustre over a period of time. We were tired of the struggle, tired of being on the road. We just played the gig and flew home. I don't think Randy and Cass really believed we were going to leave.

JF for the 1996 reissue: When the record first came out it did not do well. It took, like, a year and we thought, Well, we gave it our best shot and the public didn't take it.

JF to *Dark Star*, 1978: The album didn't go gold until three or four years after we'd split up, but the sales picked up and picked up and refused to die and they're still selling. And it's interesting, because if *Sardonicus* had come out to acclaim, and if we'd done a successful tour, and the album had gone gold right away (it eventually went gold – 500,000 units – in 1976), then perhaps we might not have broken up. We might have said, "It's worth sticking it out." But when you looked at the situation, which didn't show much promise, then looked at the fights we were going through, there wasn't a lot of incentive to stay together.

MA to It's Psychedelic Baby, June 2018: It took years before I realised how brilliant the record turned out. I now wish we'd had the skills to work through the issues that resulted in Jay and I leaving. When we started having internal conflicts, I made the decision I would make a plan and leave the band. I regret not having the skills to communicate my frustration and my fear of having very little control.

JF for the 1996 reissue: My feeling is that we should have weathered the storm with the incentive of a successful record. But with the initial public and critical indifference to *Sardonicus* it was difficult to see the reason for sticking it out. It felt like our time had come.

JF for the 2022 reissue: Maybe we were a bit ahead of the times? Or the public thought we were a bit behind the times following albums like *Sgt Pepper's* and *Ogden's Nut Gone Flake*, but there is something to be said about an album building over time like *Sardonicus* did. It was not a case of hype, but a case of word of mouth. Ironically, the critical community that originally panned it eventually started putting it on their "best of" lists.

John Locke (keyboards) for the 1996 reissue: We knew we had something special, but we didn't know how good it was until it was gone. S!

With thanks to Mick Skidmore

SPIRIT
Twelve Dreams Of Dr Sardonicus

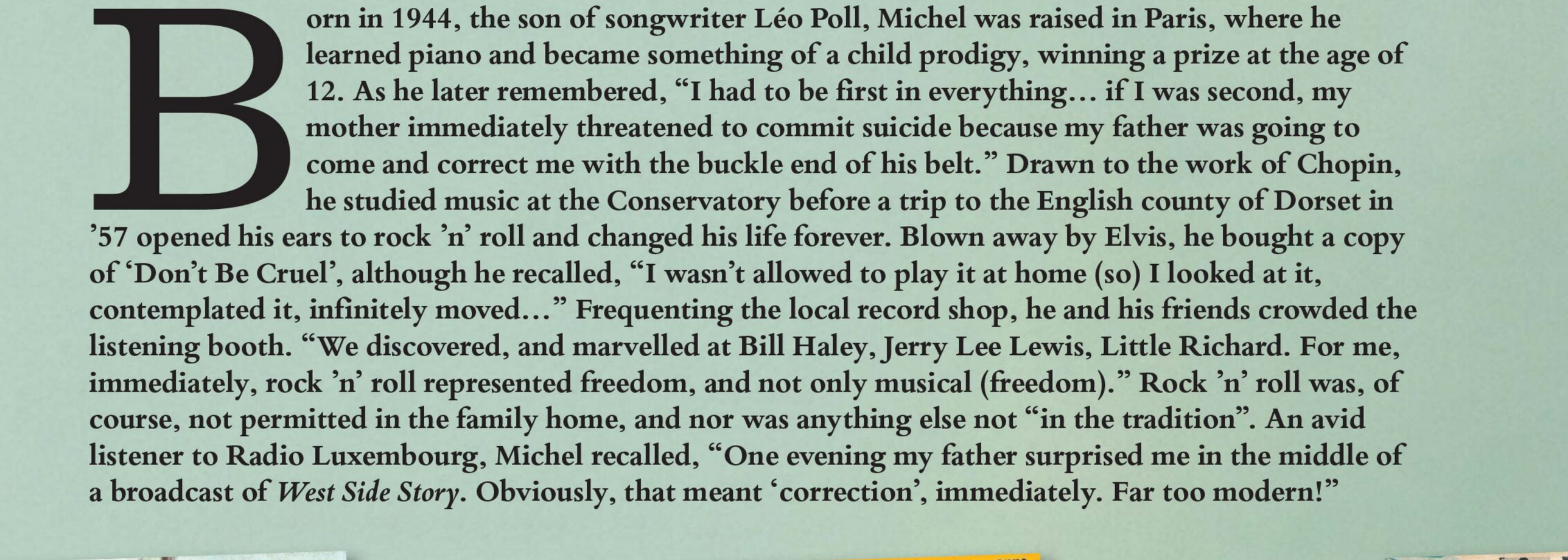
(Epic, November 1970)
US chart: #63
UK chart: #28
Singles: Animal Zoo/Red Light Roll On (July 1970)
Nature's Way/Mr Skin (January 1971)
Personnel: Mark Andes (bass, vocals)
Randy California (vocals, guitar)
Ed Cassidy (drums, percussion)
Jay Ferguson (vocals, percussion)
John Locke (keyboards)
with
Matt Andes (national steel guitar)

vive la polna

A tinkling of the ivories, like a pianist limbering up for a recital. **"Love me, please love me..."**, the voice: warm, soulful tones, begging, pleading... **"Je suis fou... de vous!"** sliding up into a Del Shannon-like falsetto. The band drifts in, backing singers wail, strings break out, floating over as beguiling a melody as was ever written. Is it rock? Pop? Easy listening? Whatever, it is one of the greatest recordings of 1966. If he had never recorded anything else, this one song would cement **MICHEL POLNAREFF**'s place in the pantheon. Fortunately for him – and for us – there was plenty more where that come from.

GARETH JONES revisits the formative days of a French pop legend

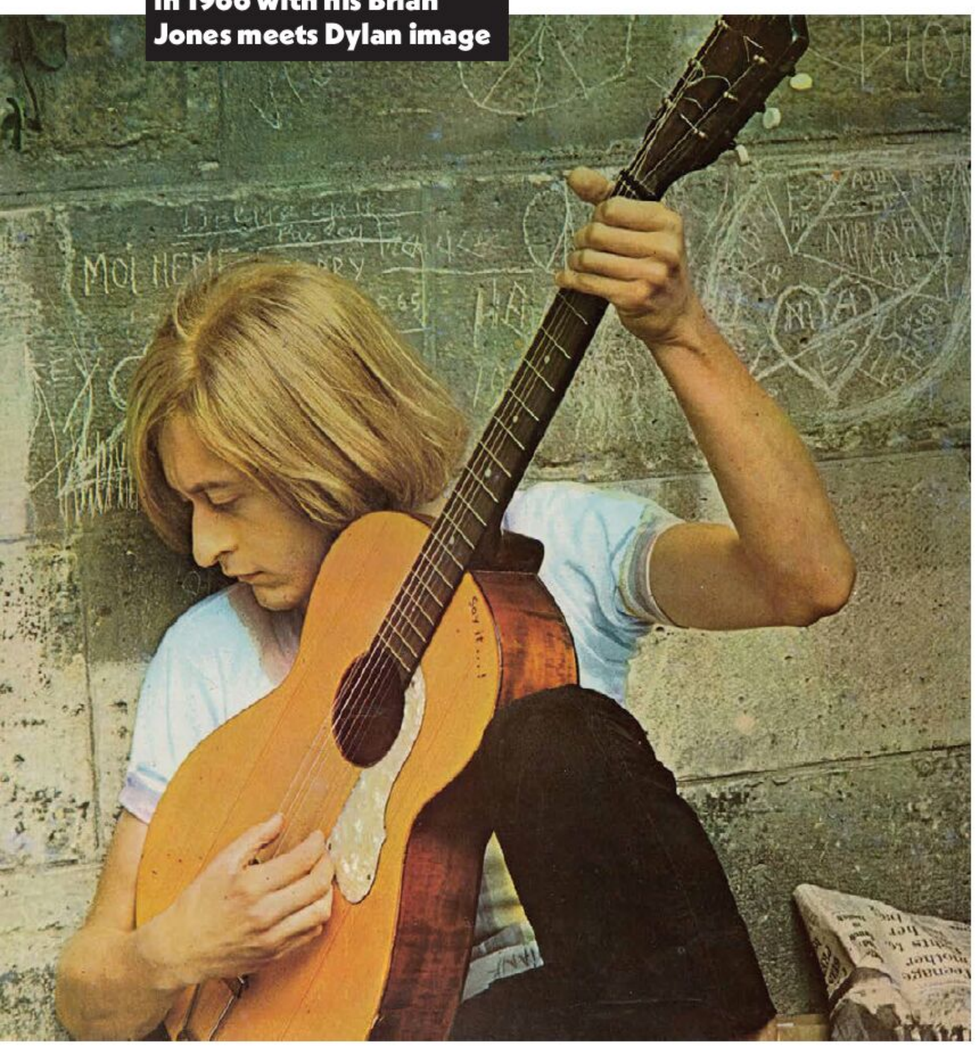
Born in 1944, the son of songwriter Léo Poll, Michel was raised in Paris, where he learned piano and became something of a child prodigy, winning a prize at the age of 12. As he later remembered, "I had to be first in everything... if I was second, my mother immediately threatened to commit suicide because my father was going to come and correct me with the buckle end of his belt." Drawn to the work of Chopin, he studied music at the Conservatory before a trip to the English county of Dorset in '57 opened his ears to rock 'n' roll and changed his life forever. Blown away by Elvis, he bought a copy of 'Don't Be Cruel', although he recalled, "I wasn't allowed to play it at home (so) I looked at it, contemplated it, infinitely moved..." Frequenting the local record shop, he and his friends crowded the listening booth. "We discovered, and marvelled at Bill Haley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Little Richard. For me, immediately, rock 'n' roll represented freedom, and not only musical (freedom)." Rock 'n' roll was, of course, not permitted in the family home, and nor was anything else not "in the tradition". An avid listener to Radio Luxembourg, Michel recalled, "One evening my father surprised me in the middle of a broadcast of *West Side Story*. Obviously, that meant 'correction', immediately. Far too modern!"



arévolution!

"If I had been homosexual, I would have proclaimed it." Polnareff photographed in 1969; the ubiquitous cover star of French '60s pop mags

Polnareff breaks through in 1966 with his Brian Jones meets Dylan image



But rock 'n' roll was the dividing line. Coming home in '60 after seeing Johnny Hallyday opening the show for comic Raymond Devos, "I ventured the opinion that this young singer was fantastic, which earned me three monumental clouts." Disenchanted with both his classical studies and his father's bourgeois lifestyle, he was by now in open rebellion, later remembering "For three years, even when sitting at the same table, I never spoke a single word to (my father) again."

Invalided out of military service for myopia, Polnareff discovered soul music via a '63 Ray Charles concert, adding another influence on the stew brewing inside his head. To this he soon added folk music via Peter, Paul & Mary, and during '64 he left home, busking around Montmartre on guitar. In the summer of '65 he hitch-hiked across France, living the beatnik dream before travelling to London, busking on pavements and hanging out in the clubs. As he later recounted to the magazine *Salut les copains*, "I saw all the great English groups play: The Beatles, Stones, Animals, Who. I thoroughly cultivated my use of the language of Shakespeare. It was fantastic, I loved England, but everyone stared at me, because of my long hair." Now determined to become a singer himself, he began knocking out songs in mangled English, of which the three-chord rocker 'The Doll Who Said No' passed into the repertoire of The Birds, although their recording only surfaced in the '90s. Returning to Paris at the end of the year, he won a talent contest at Le Locomotive club with a sensational rock 'n' roll show and signed with Disc AZ.

With an eye on international success, Polnareff intended to sing in English before bowing to pressure and agreeing to record in French. By way of compromise, he penned garbled English lyrics and asked lyricists to adapt them into French while preserving the sound (if not the sense) of the English words. He also insisted on travelling to England to record with the cream of London's session crew, including Jimmy Page on guitar and John Paul Jones on bass. Issued in spring '66, his debut EP gave him an instant hit with a folk-rock reworking of 'The Doll Who Said No' titled 'La poupée qui fait non', which smashed its way up the charts in the late spring. The song opened on a strummed guitar before introducing Polnareff's soulful vocal tones, rolling through a catchy, accessible rhythm and infectious chorus that instantly lodged in the memory. He later remembered, "It became like a national anthem, played 10 times a day on the three French radio stations. You heard nothing else!" The same EP also housed 'Beatnick', a rocker with excellent guitar-work that also garnered strong airplay. Polnareff supported the release with interviews and television appearances, winning the hearts of non-conformists everywhere with his outlandish appearance and refusal to defer to established values.

Switching styles completely (not for the first time), for the follow-up Polnareff switched to piano and unleashed the sublime ballad 'Love Me, Please Love Me'. Entered into the Rose d'or d'Antibes song contest, it didn't win but it easily outsold the contest winner (Jacqueline Dulac's

Polnareff joins Jacques Dutronc and Françoise Hardy in front of the media circus; on stage in 1968; '66 EPs

"I saw all the great English groups play: The Beatles, Stones, Animals, Who. I thoroughly cultivated my use of the language of Shakespeare. It was fantastic, I loved England. But everyone stared at me, because of my long hair"

'Ceux de Varsovie'), becoming a colossal hit over the summer. The EP also housed the startling 'L'amour avec toi', a keyboard-led folk-rocker with an irresistible melodic pull, aligned to a lyric exposing society's hypocritical attitude toward sex, declaring openly, "I want to make love with you" (six months before The Rolling Stones' taboo-busting 'Let's Spend The Night Together'). Banned from daytime airplay even as it topped the charts, the scandal (the first of many) cast Polnareff as an outsider forever. The third track on the EP, 'Ne me marchez pas sur les pieds', was a stomping, snarling rocker that kicked arse via a wild piano assault and searing fuzz guitar. On tour supporting Claude François, Polnareff came face to face with his fans, and with those who hated everything he stood for, later remembering, "I ran on, I ran off again. What happened in between was a horror. The public… threw the most diverse array of objects. One night in Marseille, it was bolts. Onstage, I was terrified. Stage fright".

This baptism of fire was followed at the end of the year by a self-titled debut album. The record summed up his wide-ranging vision with a set of songs that included a pair sung in English, with lyrics by future Procol Harum collaborator Keith Reid: the R&B raver 'You'll Be On My Mind' and the thumping, falsetto-fuelled 'Time Will Tell'. Four tracks were excised for the next EP, generating hits with the melancholy, reflective 'Sous quelle étoile suis-je né?' and the pop perfection of 'L'oiseau de nuit'.

Polnareff's success came at just as French pop began to turn away from covers of foreign songs in favour of original material, a demand that he was ready and able to meet. From his melting pot of influences – he would later recollect, "I sang Dylan in bogus English. I was fascinated by the success of The Beatles, but personally, I was pro-Stones. I adored Ray Charles. I was also mad about Sinatra…" – something distinctive had emerged, a sound that came from nobody but himself. Like Brian Wilson, Polnareff conjured sounds in his imagination and then painstakingly experimented in the studio until he got it right. Producer Ray Singer remembers Polnareff storming out of the studio because of a badly tuned piano, while engineer John Mackswith remembers him starting a session with a 42-piece orchestra and dispensing with them all in turn, ending the session alone with one guitar. Working at his own pace, he took an increasing interest in every aspect of recording and production, controlling the process down to the final mixing to ensure that the results reflected the sounds he heard in his head.

His first release of '67, 'Ta ta ta ta', featured gypsy violin, an oriental hook, a strident vocal and a stop-start arrangement that came together in another smash hit. The ambiguous lyric, together with the singer's increasingly androgynous appearance offered further affronts to the establishment, who assumed he was gay and castigated him as an immoral influence. As Michel says, "If I had been homosexual, I would have proclaimed it, and refused to be called a dirty straight guy," neatly inverting the accusation to expose its inherent ridiculousness. Happily, the times have since changed, although back in '67, he was employing bodyguards to keep his

Someone else's turn on the *Musik Parade* cover this week; transformative 1967 45s and EPs; Polnareff at the Rabelais launch party, late'68

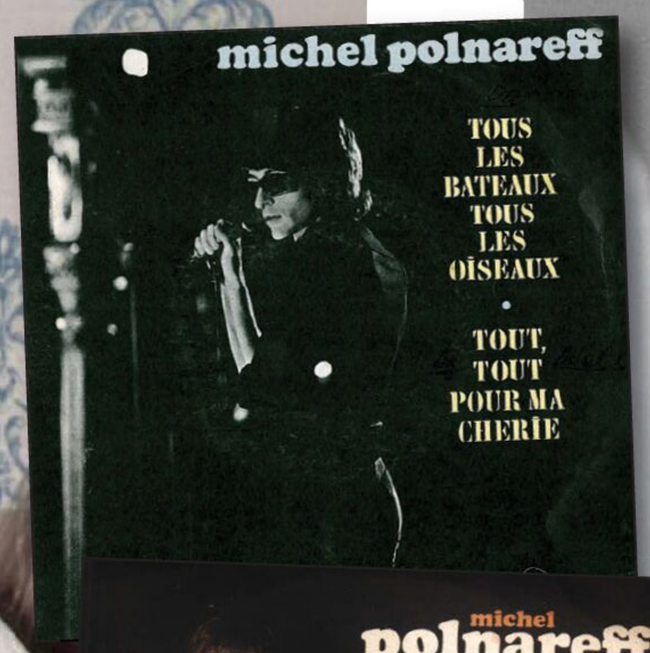
critics at bay. The EP generated two further airplay favourites with the poppy 'Le pauv' guitariste' and the near *a capella* 'Complainte à Michaël', packing more invention and creativity into seven inches of vinyl than most artists managed across 12. Then it was back on the road, some rough sounding live recordings (released in 2017) showing that he was fast learning his craft, with no sign of the stage fright that had dogged him the previous year.

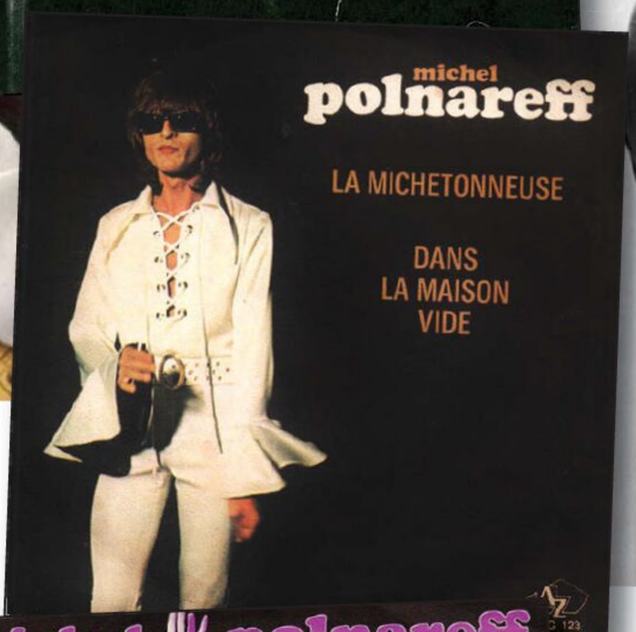
He upped the ante in May with the majestic 'Âme caline', a masterpiece of piano-led orchestral pop that soared to the heavens on the back of Polnareff's incomparable falsetto and a cascading string arrangement. (Retitled 'Soal Coaxing', it became a standard for easy listening orchestras around the world for the next decade). The same EP also included the English-language 'Fat Madame', with lyrics by Ray Singer (whom Polnareff would later introduce to a busker he had met in Paris, Peter Sarstedt) and spun off a second hit with the near-Spectorian 'Le saule pleureur'.

The sessions were followed by more concerts across Europe, accompanied everywhere by hysterical fans. He later wrote, "The German girls were completely unhinged. In front of my hotel, they stood on top of one another in a human pyramid to try to see me and they managed to lift one of them to the third floor. Opening my window, scared to death, I kissed her…" Finding himself in Brussels without a guitarist, he phoned Mike Pinder of The Moody Blues. "He told me to go to the airport to meet a friend of his who liked my music… and it was Jeff Beck who disembarked from the plane. Together, we played some crazy concerts." The year climaxed with a successful show at the Olympia theatre in Paris supporting The Beach Boys (with Big Jim Sullivan on guitar) and a new EP which kept him in the charts with the majestic 'Mes regrets' and the pop-psych 'Dame dame'. But the best was yet to come.

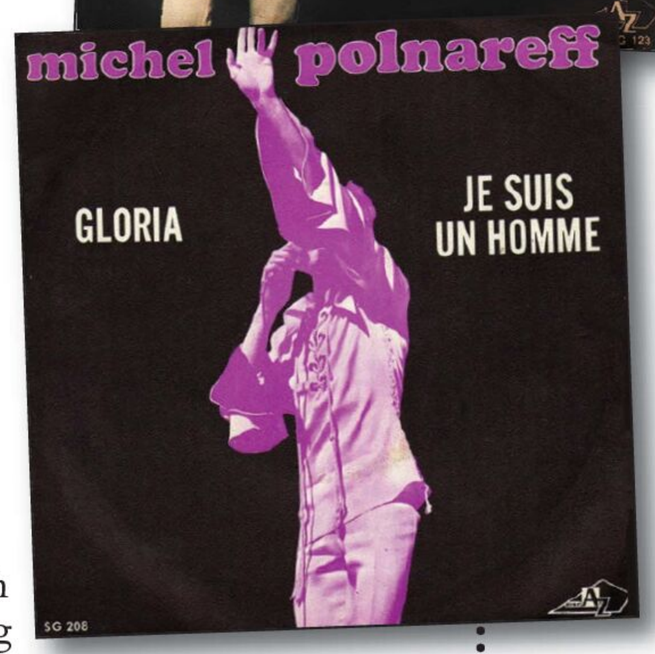
Issued early in '68, 'Le bal des Laze' was a towering work of genius merging Phil Spector, The Beach Boys and Bob Dylan into a dark, brooding classic (think 'Surf's Up' reworked for "1968 France", and you're getting close). From the eerie organ introduction through a sublime orchestral build-up, the music gelled perfectly, topped by one of the most intriguing lyrics ever to grace a pop record. Rightly revered as a classic today, at the time, it was largely overlooked. Michel recalled, "It was played far less often on the radio than its flipside, which was recorded as a kind of release from the pressure of recording 'Bal'. I was furious." A ridiculous novelty hoe-down, 'Y'a qu'un cheveu' was popular on the airwaves but it was both a commercial and an artistic misstep (the jaunty rolling piano of 'Encore un mois, encore un an' would have been a better choice, but sales were hardly helped by the riots and strikes that broke out a few weeks later). As Michel wryly wrote, "It was my poorest selling EP but 'Le bal des Laze' is also the title that is invariably included in lists of the greatest French songs since the invention of lists of great songs. One for the lovers of pop paradoxes."

With the chaos of May '68 putting paid to plans for a new album, four tracks emerged as an EP in July, peppering the airwaves with the Bee Gees-influenced ballad 'Jour après jour', the off-the-wall 'Pipelette' and the striking 'Les grands sentiments humains', which married a tolling church bell to a skipping jazz violin, while the lyric reminded listeners of Polnareff's personal philosophy. He played no part in the political unrest of the year, although his constant challenges to "straight" society – attire, hair, ambiguous lyrics, brazen sexuality, even his brief use of an all-female band of Swedish musicians – certainly challenged the mores of the time. Instead, he poured his energies into composing the music for the theatrical production Rabelais, a critical success in both Paris and London that brought the singer an invitation to meet Britain's royal family. Michel amusedly recounted, "I arrived at Heathrow with my girlfriend, dressed in a miniskirt leaving nothing to the imagination. The customs officers greeted us warily, wondering what we were doing there. The answer – "dinner with the queen" – provoked general hilarity… I took the folded invitation out of the pocket of my jeans. Its appearance totally paralysed the guards." To close the year, he issued another EP, highlighted by the melancholy 'Pourquoi faut-il se dire adieu' and the West Coast-styled 'Ring-a-ding'. With the bulk of his recent hits gathered on the album *Polnareff Volume 2,* he





Plus ça change. The decade draws to a close with a bloody nose; the 45s just keep coming



"I arrived at Heathrow with my girlfriend dressed in a mini-skirt leaving nothing to the imagination. The customs officers greeted us warily, wondering what we were doing there. The answer – 'dinner with the queen' – provoked general hilarity"

entered '69 as the most creative star in French pop.

Polnareff nevertheless surrendered compositional duties for his first single of the year to Paul de Senneville, although the majestic ballad 'Tous les bateaux, tous les oiseaux' bore all the hallmarks of a Polnareff production. Opening with the sound of a boat leaving harbour, the song's rolling arrangement nestled into a wash of strings that came dangerously close to easy-listening, but the soulful delivery gave it a depth it might otherwise have lacked and it went on to become the smash ballad of the summer. On the flipside was Polnareff's own 'Tout, tout pour ma chérie', an irrepressible stick of bubble-gum delivered in his best falsetto, complete with multi-track harmonies. As natural a hit as could be imagined, it duly became one, giving him a double-sided smash (two years later, it would also be a massive hit in Japan, where it remains a classic).

Polnareff ended '69 in triumph with 'La michetonneuse', more chewy bubble-gum with Cowsills-like arrangements belying an altogether darker lyric that raised eyebrows across the country. Radio flipped the record to reveal an even more stunning piece of work, the stupendous 'Dans la maison vide', the culmination of the Polnareff style into one blockbusting package. For Michel, "The song fitted me perfectly… I love the intro, with the violins tuning up. The listener literally has the impression of an imaginary red curtain opening." From dramatic verses over a stark string and piano arrangement, the song cascaded into a waterfall of orchestration as Polnareff ripped through a heart-rending lyric. Carried along a relentless rhythm by one of arranger Bill Shepherd's best-ever orchestrations, Polnareff took his orchestral rock dream to a sublime pinnacle, ringing down the curtain on the '60s with one of the most explosive pop records ever made.

Following back-to-back chart-toppers was always going to be tough and his first 45 of the '70s was inevitably overshadowed by its predecessors. In its own way though, 'Un train ce soir' was another masterpiece, worthy of Bacharach at his best, shifting gears easily from the slow rolling verses into a punchy horn-powered chorus as if it was a natural transition. Backed by the lazy, syncopated 'Avec Nini', the record scored good airplay but inexplicably fared poorly in the shops.

Demand for live shows had however never been higher. Over the first six months of the year Polnareff worked at a frantic pace, playing as many as 24 shows a month across the country. By now though, his popularity had generated a huge backlash from those who resented his attitude, his androgynous appeal, his non-conformist approach and his eagerness to provoke reactionaries to anger. Matters came to a head on 4th June when, as Polnareff recalls, "A spectator jumped onto the stage, threw himself at me and hit me. After giving me a very low blow below the belt, he punched me square in the face. I fell back and knocked myself out against the piano." The assault had a devastating effect on his confidence, and he was hospitalised following a nervous collapse as he tried to make sense of what had happened.

Returning to London at the end of the month, he channelled his pain, anger and frustration into a new single. 'Gloria' was another keyboard-driven opus with gospel-like backing, a sumptuous orchestral arrangement and a gutsy rhythm section. On the flipside was the heartfelt 'Je suis un homme', on which he proudly avowed his masculinity in a lyric dealing honestly with the adoration of his female fans. Carried on acoustic guitar and featuring celestial backing vocals rising into a 'Hey Jude'-like ending, the song was a defiant, two-fingered riposte to his critics and gave him another double-sided smash.

There were further triumphs to come but the on-stage assault had left scars that would never properly heal. The following decades would produce their share of jewels – most notably '71 masterpiece *Polnareff's* and his commercial highpoint, '81's *Bulles* – but Polnareff would never again be as consistent, as prolific or as confident in his abilities as he was during that opening five-year run. But he didn't need to be – his legend was already complete. In recent decades, his cult has rippled out across the globe (Pulp, Marc Almond, The Residents, Nick Cave and St Etienne have all covered his songs, and he even has a Manga character named after him!), rightly enshrining his '60s output where it belongs – right there among the certified classics of the era. S!

Gareth Jones's book French Pop: From Music Hall To Yé Yé *is available from Music Mentor Books. Quotes taken from Polnareff's memoir,* Polnareff par Polnareff. *Additional quotes, and the memories of Ray Singer and Jack Mackswith, from Jean-Emmanuel Deluxe and Raechel Leigh Carter's* Polnaroïds

THE EYES HAVE IT

BURSTING OUT OF SUBURBAN WEST LONDON WITH AN INTOXICATING COCKTAIL OF TOUGH, AGGRESSIVE MOD-ROCK, HOME-MADE POP ART VISUALS AND MASSES OF SEX APPEAL, **THE EYES** APPEARED TO HAVE IT ALL. BUT THEIR FONDNESS FOR PUSHING THE ENVELOPE MANAGED TO UPSET RADIO PROGRAMMERS AND THE MUSIC PAPERS, WHILE SHORT-SIGHTED MANAGEMENT ENSURED THEIR POPULARITY DIDN'T TRANSLATE INTO RECORD SALES.

IAN O'SULLIVAN MEETS FOUNDER MEMBER TERRY NOLDER AND JOURNEYS BACK TO THE GRASS-ROOTS UK MUSIC SCENE OF THE MAD MOD MID-60S.

PORTRAIT BY **DEZO HOFFMANN**

"You're in a band! You've got to look the part!" The Eyes in 1965. L-R: Brian Corcoran, Phil Heatley, Terry Nolder, Chris Lovegrove, Barry Allchin

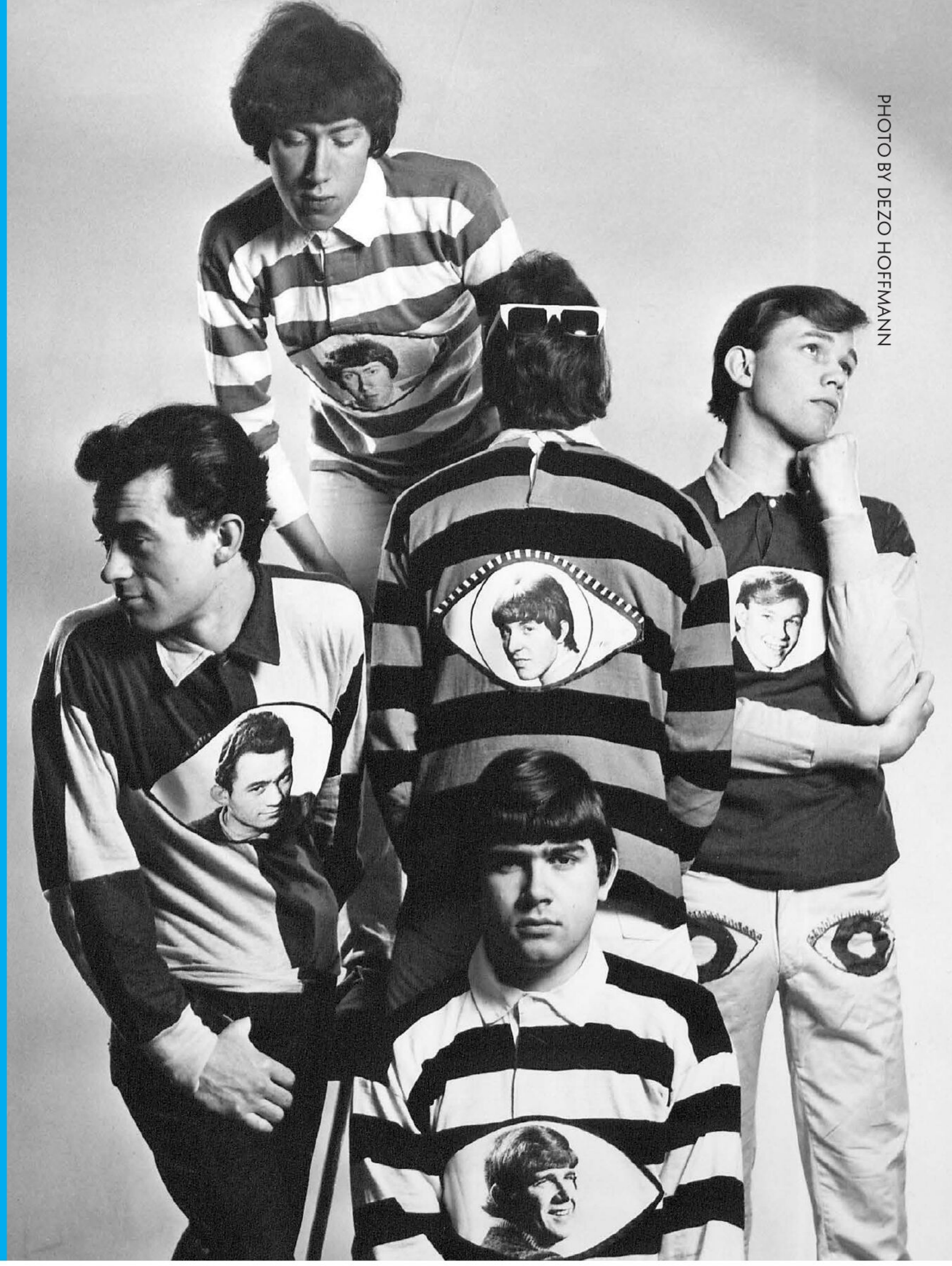
Phil, Brian, Terry and Barry in early 1965

Ealing, "The Queen of the suburbs", always fostered a reputation as a respectable borough to the west of central London. However, for such a genteel suburb, its musical contribution to the post-war cultural life of the country can't be overstated. The opening of The Ealing Blues Club off a dingy alleyway opposite Ealing Broadway Station by Cyril Davies and Alexis Korner in 1962 was a pivotal moment and became a cradle, along with The Crawdaddy in Richmond and Eel Pie Island in Twickenham, for what became known as The British Blues Explosion. Pete Townshend, a local Ealing boy, attended Ealing Art School, where lectures from Gustav Metzger on Auto-Destructive art influenced his approach to playing guitar in The Who. Jim Marshall's music shop in nearby Hanwell not only gave the world one of the most iconic names in musical amplification but also, in the diminutive form of a young shop assistant called Mitch Mitchell, one of the most dynamic drummers of the era.

As an Ealing native myself, by the time I was a teenager in the late '70s/early '80s, whatever glory it had basked in some 20 years earlier had long since passed. In '83 I came across a band called The Eyes on a couple of *Perfumed Garden* compilations and recall being stunned on first hearing 'When The Night Falls'. I played it endlessly. There were no photographs or liner notes. The band was a mystery. Bam Caruso's *Blink* compilation followed shortly afterwards, and provided what was to be a lightning bolt moment as it revealed that The Eyes were also from Ealing. I had found my true local music heroes. But where were they now? Some 40 years later, through the wonders of social media, I was able to connect with The Eyes' singer Terry Nolder and discovered that not only had he never left the area, but in fact lived only two streets away from me. We had to meet. Terry got a kick out of knowing that my own Ealing-based band The Aardvarks had covered two of his songs throughout our tenure: 'You're Too Much' during our earlier days and 'I'm Rowed Out' (at pretty much every gig we ever played). Terry and I have a mutual friend in Paul 'Smiler' Anderson (author of *Mods: The New Religion* and *Scorcha!*) and I'm pleased to report that Paul is currently working on a book on The Eyes. In the meantime, Terry cordially agreed to some mild interrogation for *Shindig!* readers.

"Well initially I wasn't a singer. I hadn't been in a band at all," Terry begins. "I went to a wedding reception and this band was on playing mostly instrumentals. It seemed very dated to me so at one point I asked them whether they'd ever considered having a singer. I said what they were doing was a bit old-fashioned. I was a bit rude! I liked The Shadows initially as well, like everybody did, but

“I STARTED TRYING TO GET THE BAND TO WEAR CERTAIN THINGS LIKE STRIPES AND DIFFERENT COLOURS. I STARTED DYEING JEANS UPSIDE DOWN, RED ONE END, BLUE THE OTHER. WE HAD AN EYE MADE IN FABRIC WITH OUR PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE MIDDLE, WHICH WE APPLIED ONTO RUGBY SHIRTS”



you know, ‘Hello, move on!’”

The band agreed to try Terry out in a local hall and the consensus was that incorporating a vocalist would be a good move. The next thing was to find a name. The band did a brief stint as Dave Russell & The Renegades, which was soon consigned to the bin. “We changed it to another one, which was even worse: Gerry Hart & The Hartbeats. We did keep that name (later shortened to The Hartbeats) for at least a year. It was all wedding bookings and all that sort of stuff.” The band at this point comprised of Terry on vocals, Barry Allchin (bass), Ken Girvan (drums), Phil Heatley (rhythm) and Chris Lovegrove (lead).

They were still playing the rock ’n’ roll, R&B and pop standards that many other bands included in their repertoire, so Terry, becoming increasingly impatient with covering “old-fashioned stuff”, got the band to listen to more contemporary sounds.

Throughout ’64 the group became increasingly involved in the local mod scene. Chris’s father acted as an unofficial manager, helping to organise and sell tickets for gigs in the local area. The band entered a local beat competition at Ealing Town Hall but, despite not actually winning, they won many fans who would go on to follow them around their shows in the area. Ealing Town Hall, along with The Ventures Club (held at Greenford Community Centre) – both with very large capacity halls – were to be the venues that sealed the band’s reputation as the hottest group in town.

“The Greenford Community Centre had a basement which could get about 300 people in it. When it’s full it’s fantastic because there was so much atmosphere. We started playing there and that got more and more people talking about us. Every time we played there it was packed. The gigs were sold out. Then we used to book Ealing Town Hall ourselves because we found out that you could book the main hall for a certain amount. If we sold tickets ourselves, we could make more money than just getting our normal fee if we worked with a promoter.”

On 2nd February ’65, *The County Times & Gazette*, in an article called ‘Pop group gets offers’, reported that local band The Hartbeats had received two offers to turn professional after only 18 months together and “find themselves rocketing – possibly to the verge of stardom.” However, drummer Ken Girvan found that the dilemma over whether to hold down his well-paid day job or take a chance on pop stardom was too much and opted to part company shortly after the article appeared. The piece is notable in that it also mentions that the band were about to change their name to The Eyes, as the present one, Terry, tells the reporter, “is a bit sloppy”. With Ken’s decision to stick to the nine-to-five, a replacement was soon found in Brian Corcoran.

Terry recalls, “The mod scene in the area was getting quite noticeable at that point. I really liked the look they had. I also thought that it was time to change our name again. We threw a few ideas around and eventually decided on The Eyes – I think it was from that expression, “The eyes have it”. Once we changed our name to The Eyes, somehow the music changed, and the styling changed. We now had a goal and became something a bit more specific. We felt part of a movement, you know? The mod movement.” The band also became regulars at The Ealing Club and the Les Wilde’s dancehall in Ealing Broadway as well as The Ricky-Tick club in nearby

PHOTO BY DEZO HOFFMANN

"IT WAS LIKE THE BEATLES, WITH HUNDREDS OF GIRLS SCREAMING. WE'RE LOOKING AROUND THINKING, IS THIS FOR SOMEONE ELSE? NEXT THING WE COULD HEAR ALL THIS RUMBLING OF FEET COMING DOWN THE CORRIDORS AND GIRLS TRYING TO BREAK THE DOOR DOWN!"

The first two singles, subsequently combined for *The Arrival Of The Eyes* EP

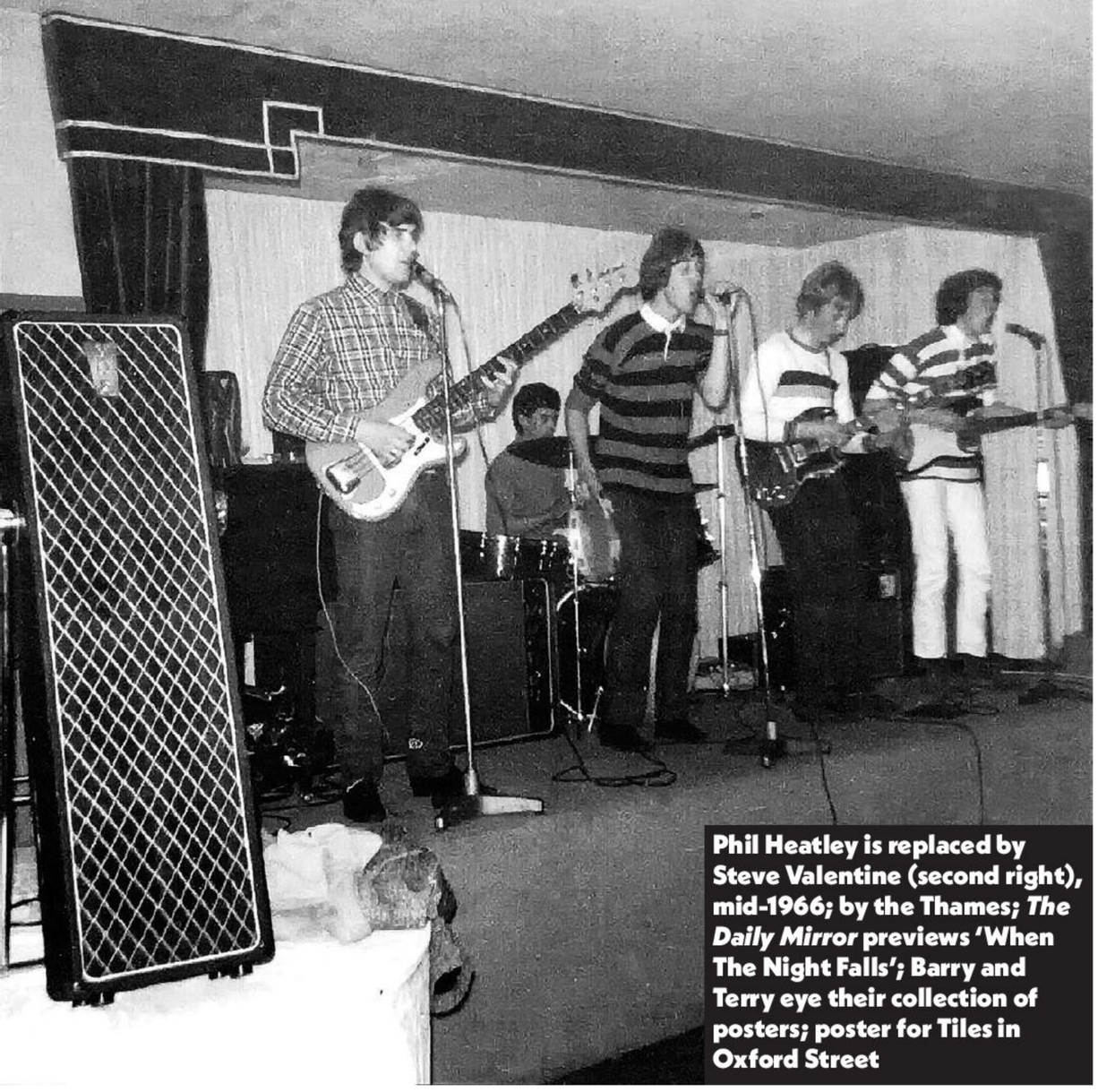
Hounslow and Tiles in Oxford Street.

The styling certainly changed as The Eyes, primarily at Terry's instigation, embraced a Pop Art ethic which manifested itself in one of the boldest band images of the time. "I felt quite strongly that we had to have a very visual look on stage," Terry states. "I started trying to get the band to wear certain things like stripes and different colours, just to give ourselves a different look. I had a bit of resistance at the beginning, but I think once we started, they got into it a bit more. Brian was a lovely bloke, but he didn't give a toss how he looked. I'd be, 'You're in a band! You've got to look the part!' So basically, I started dyeing jeans upside down, red one end, blue the other. Stripey belts, black & white check belts. We had an eye made in fabric with our photographs in the middle, which we applied onto rugby shirts, and we all had to have a different coloured rugby shirt. When we came on stage, it was really visual, and we looked good when the lights went up. The audiences liked it and they reacted to that."

Terry also went on to use old army parkas to create a heightened Pop Art version of the mod staple. Securing a batch of white cotton parka shaped coats from the army surplus store in West Ealing, these were then dyed in different colours. A friend's Vespa tyre was then employed to roll a black track-mark across the back and front. "We used to wear those on stage, and they looked great under the lights when you first came on – but we only wore them for a couple of numbers because we'd get too hot! But it was a really good look, so there was definitely a very conscious thing to have a very strong stage presence."

It was around this time that the band were spotted by a record executive from Phillips. "That was the changing point. I think somebody had mentioned us to him and he came along to see us. He said he was interested in us doing a demo to see what it sounded like." With new manager Geoff Marsh in place, a studio was booked and a demo of 'When The Night Falls' was recorded. The demo was given to Mike Hawker at Phillips who liked it and was keen to work with the band. Then, with a contract with Mercury signed, 'When The Night Falls' was recorded at the Phillips studio in Stanhope Place, near Marble Arch, and released on 5th November '65, *The Daily Mirror* reporting its release the previous day. As debuts go, 'When The Night Falls' stands not only in the top tier of British freakbeat, but in the annals of '60s rock singles in general – its ominous sparse verses colliding with a feedback-fuelled moody solo section. "The demo of 'When The Night Falls' was quite ploddy. Very different. We decided to make it a bit louder and a bit quicker. We wanted to make it sound like it was late at night, and there were cars screeching. It was about missing someone and walking the streets. It was all very moody. We had to do quite a bit of rehearsal trying to get all the sounds with the feedback and everything else."

Flipside 'I'm Rowed Out', with its 'I Can't Explain'-aping riff, was curiously banned from airplay, not by the BBC, but by Radio Caroline. Interviewed in *The Gazette & Post* on 11th November, Barry Allchin gave a suitably indifferent reaction to the ban. "They thought the lyrics to 'I'm Rowed Out' were a bit strong. I admit they don't leave much to the imagination. We say what we think. Too many groups pander to public opinion. Our music is harsh and jerky. Well, it is loud! You have to follow the trends – play what the kids want to hear." Any hopes that publicity of the ban would translate into record sales soon faltered, however, and the single failed to make a dent in the charts.



DAILY MIRROR, Thursday, November 4, 1965 PAGE 23

Out of focus

PUT a fish eye camera lens on the newest in disc groups and this is what you get. The goldfish bowl look, with exaggerated dimensions.

The five distorted characters don't mind a bit. Aren't they known as The Eyes?

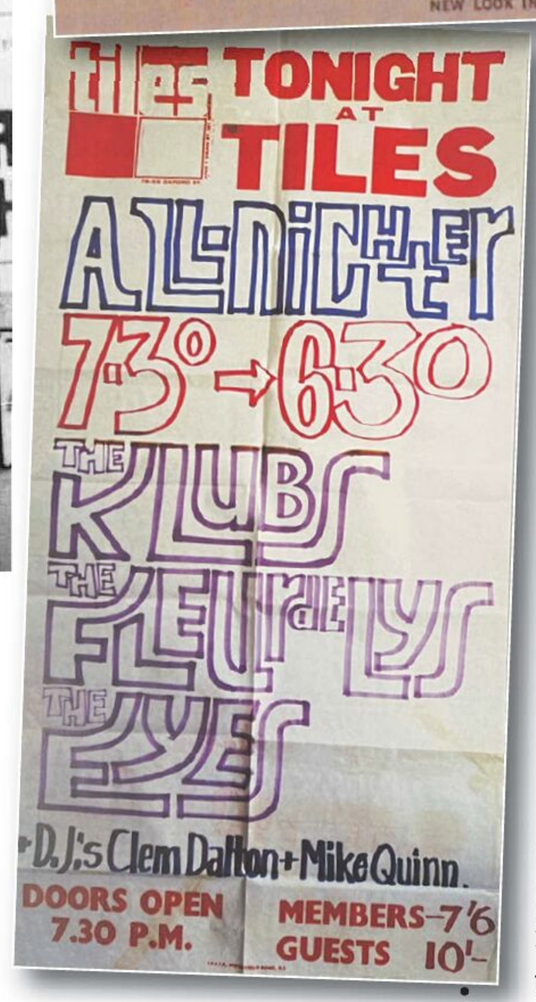
Aren't they five lads from Ealing, London, with eye emblems sewn to their shirts—and their pants?

Don't they wear offbeat rig—Soccer jerseys and red or yellow boots?

Well, then.

Their music has a with-it-ness, too . . . as heard on Mercury with "When The Night Falls."

NEW LOOK IN DISC GROUPS. THEY ARE CALLED "THE EYES."



Phil Heatley is replaced by Steve Valentine (second right), mid-1966; by the Thames; *The Daily Mirror* previews 'When The Night Falls'; Barry and Terry eye their collection of posters; poster for Tiles in Oxford Street

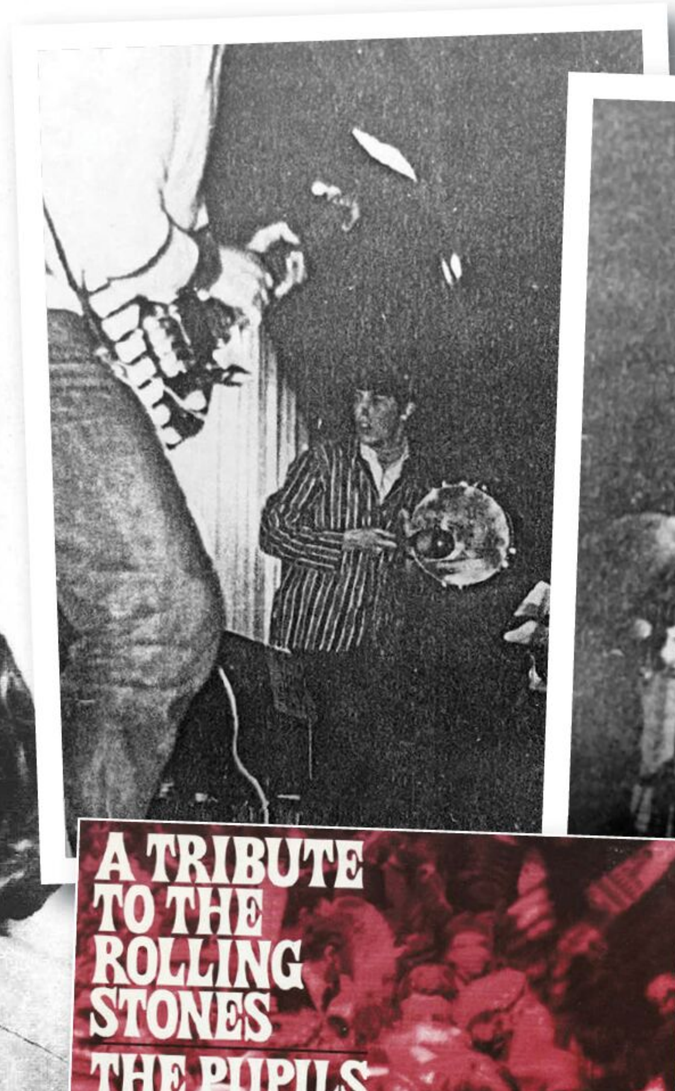
The follow-up 'The Immediate Pleasure' / 'My Degeneration', released just two months later, didn't fare much better. This time it was Auntie Beeb that took exception to the A-side's suggestive title and removed it from its playlist. Mercury however had made more effort to promote the single, most notably with a very visible poster campaign on London Underground platforms and advertising hoardings along its escalators. Terry notes, "So they did spend money on us, but it just still didn't work."

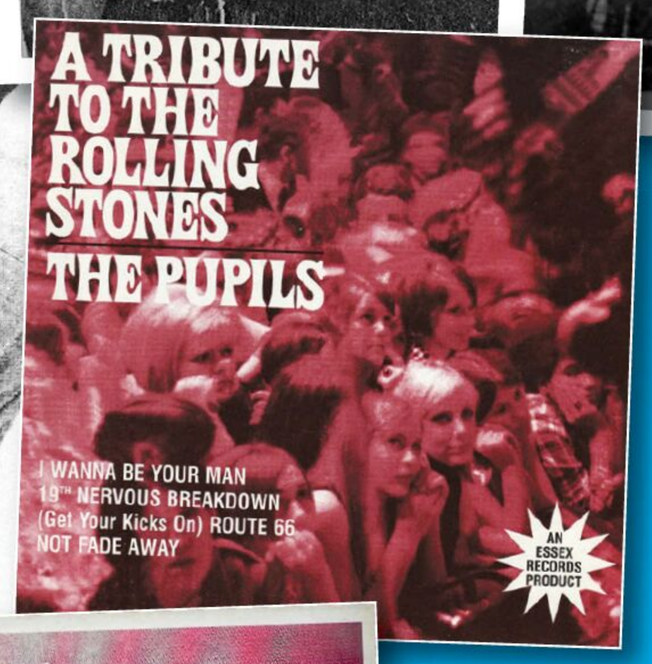
Terry recounts the launch night for the single: "They did a big promotion night at Radio London at Dunstable Civic Hall and they'd have bands going on to play their new singles. You had to mime, which we found really weird. We'd never done that, but we had a go. But when they introduced us, it was like The Beatles, with hundreds of girls screaming. We're looking around thinking, Is this for someone else? Then they all invaded the stage, so we had to eventually get off and go to our dressing room. Next thing we could hear all this rumbling of feet coming down the corridors and girls trying to break the door down! It was quite scary. It was the first time we'd experienced that feeling we could be onto something." Interestingly, it was 'My Degeneration' that was picked up by the mods and was getting the most play in the clubs.

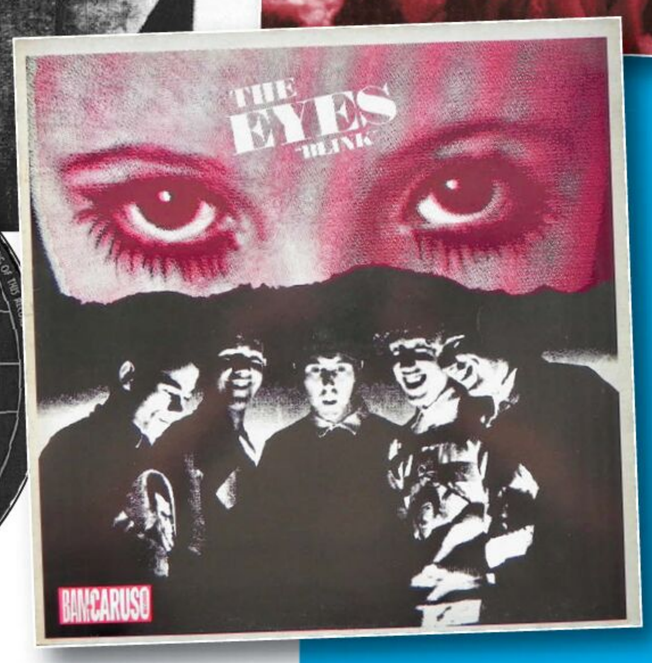
Despite these run-ins with the radio stations and a struggle to set the charts alight, The Eyes were busier than ever, playing gigs across the country. The schedule could be pretty gruelling as the band could rarely afford to stay overnight and once the gear had been packed away, they faced a long drive back to London in the transit van, arriving home in the small hours. This changed briefly when The Eyes were chosen to support The Kinks on their tour of The Potteries (an amalgamation of six towns in the Stoke-on-Trent region). The band got their first taste of a professional tour, staying in hotels and living life on the road. Terry remembers, "The Kinks tour was great. We used to go down really well before The Kinks came on. In fact, one night, The Kinks had to go off somewhere quickly to do another show, so they went on before us, and we were thinking, 'Oh God! are we going to die?' But we needn't have worried. We came on and they all went mad! We used to finish with 'You're Too Much', and it used to bring the house down."

As '66 rolled on, and with a return to a relentless schedule of one-night stands around the country, frustration started to kick in. A powerpop reading of The Everly Brothers' 'Man With Money' (soon to be recorded in a remarkably similar style by The Who) with the fuzz-drenched 'You're Too Much' on the flipside was released in May. But with it once again not gaining any real chart traction, it was guitarist Phil Heatley who first decided to throw in the towel. An ad for a replacement guitarist went out and Phil was replaced by Steve Valentine, something of an ace mod himself. "Steve was good, he was really into how we looked, so he was a good replacement. He used to turn up looking cool with his little jackets and tight jeans, and his hair done perfectly. So yeah, he had a good image."

By this point, however, the band had released three singles which hadn't been hits. The next single, a cover of The Beatles' 'Good Day Sunshine' with its fuzz guitar and Kinks-ian overtones, proved to be the final single by The Eyes. Terry's hopes of having a hit with original material were now usurped by an imperative from the label to record a cover version in the hope of chart action. However, as the band and label were to







Third and fourth singles; The Pupils' album; Bam Caruso's *Blink* compilation; rare snaps of The Eyes on stage

"ONE NIGHT, THE KINKS HAD TO GO OFF TO DO ANOTHER SHOW, SO THEY WENT ON BEFORE US. WE WERE THINKING, 'OH GOD! ARE WE GOING TO DIE?' BUT WE NEEDN'T HAVE WORRIED. WE CAME ON AND THEY ALL WENT MAD!"

discover, this hope was diluted as The Eyes weren't the only band to release a cover of the song around the same time.

Mike Hawker, who'd really supported the band, realised that his hands were tied and some kind of renumeration for the label's investment would be required. As head of A&R and the band's producer, Hawker needed financial results. Hawker had always felt protective of, and got on very well with, his young charges. In order to bring in some cash, an offer was made to the band to record an LP of Rolling Stones covers, with no obligation for the band to use their real name. They opted for the pseudonym The Pupils. The release was to be for the budget label Wing, which routinely churned out budget-priced covers albums. Dispirited but resigned to oblige, Terry and the band spent two weeks rehearsing the 12 Jagger/Richards songs that would be recorded in a single 12-hour recording session.

"Typical, isn't it?" Terry reflects. "Ironic. And then I think we carried on for a bit. There wasn't much more scope of us doing any more singles. We were going for two years, more or less. And the middle part – from '65 when 'When The Night Falls' came out, up until 'Man With Money' – that period was really good. We were doing loads of gigs, and we were really popular. We had loads of press everywhere saying The Eyes are a band that is going to make it." But like countless other young hopefuls at the time, it was not to be.

The Eyes gradually faltered throughout the early part of '67 with the other members returning to day jobs. However, Terry wasn't done with the music business yet. In '68 he answered a classified ad for a singer in *Melody Maker* for a band called The Entire Sioux Nation featuring Terry Wallis (later of Pink Fairies, UFO and Motorhead) on guitar, Tim Taylor on bass and Paul Nichols on drums.

A long trip out from Ealing to Walworth in South East London to meet the band led to Terry being informed that he was in but would have to grow his hair out. The Entire Sioux Nation made its debut at The Lyceum in London supporting, and, according to the review in *Melody Maker*, completely blowing away Noel Redding's newly formed Fat Mattress. A monthly slot at The Speakeasy saw them being lauded by fellow musicians on London's burgeoning rock scene. It was there that Kit Lambert saw them and was eager to manage them. Lambert called their manager Tony Hall, only to be told that he wasn't interested in letting Lambert have the band. Interest from record labels soon followed but Hall demanded so much money in advance royalties that they backed away. Hall also put the brakes on a chance for the band, after a successful UK tour with Procol Harum, to do the same in the US. Again,

Terry Nolder with his collection of Eyes 45s

Hall made unreasonable advanced financial demands, so the band remained grounded in London. Frustrated at the constant obstacles Hall was throwing in their way of success, they decided the only to get out of their contract was to split up for six months, after which they would be free to go elsewhere. It was a risky venture. During that time other bands came to the fore, and The Entire Sioux Nation drifted apart with the drummer returning north to join Lindisfarne and Wallis becoming fully embedded in the Ladbroke Grove freak scene by joining The Pink Fairies.

After finally walking away from the music business, Terry decided on a career as a fashion designer which, given his input to the strong image embodied by The Eyes, was a natural move. He signed up at Chelsea School Of Art and then Harrow School Of Art. Nolder's graduation show in '77 led to what became an extensive and rewarding career in the fashion industry. Three years later, he won The British Eveningwear Designer Of The Year Award which was followed by The British Fashion Designer Of The Year Award in '81. By then The Eyes must've seemed like a lifetime ago, but only a couple of years later those *Perfumed Garden* compilations would appear and The Eyes would start to attract a whole new devoted generation of fans. S!

With special thanks to Terry Nolder, Paul 'Smiler' Anderson, Paul Gammage and Phil Smee at The Strange Things Archive

SPEED FREAKS!

MORE WIDE-EYED MID-60S LONDON MOD BANDS' WILDEST SIDES

Those other West London heroes The Birds

The In Crowd • Things She Says
(B-side, Parlophone, April 1965)

Before Steve Howe and Twink joined The In Crowd and they morphed into Tomorrow, Keith West and Junior Wood appeared on this pounding mod-raver, cut as the flip to a rather staid cover of Otis Redding's 'That's How Strong My Love Is'. Recorded after swallowing some purple hearts and practically vamped on the spot, the performance's eye-popping, wild edge epitomises the mod attack of that year.

The Favourite Sons • That Driving Beat
(A-side, Mercury, May 1966)

Signed by Mike Hurst in 1965, one single followed for the sharp teenaged Hatfield band, who took Willie Mitchell's mod classic and added loud, distorted guitars that echoed The Birds' heavy sound. B-side 'Walkin' Walkin' Walkin'' ain't no slouch either. A CD of their unreleased sessions was released by Angel Air in 2002, and includes a fine cover of 'No Good Without You Baby'. Like many of the class of the '65 their promise was never achieved.

The Birds • How Can It Be
(B-side, Decca, October 1965)

Mostly remembered for featuring the young Ronnie Wood in their ranks, this Hillingdon/Uxbridge quintet cut four fiery 45s and a handful of unreleased sides, and were a massively popular live attraction in the West London area and beyond. Wood's 'How Can It Be' (the flipside of an equally intense reading of Marvin Gaye's 'No Good Without You Baby') condenses their savage amped-up R&B into three minutes of ultra-compressed mod bravado.

A Wild Uncertainty • A Man With Money
(A-side, Planet, October 1966)

Which of the several versions of The Everly Brothers' 1965 B-side became the template for recordings by The Eyes, The Who and this London quartet remains moot, but A Wild Uncertainty's was the second to be released, on Shel Talmy's Planet label. Named by Andrew Loog Oldham, managed by The Action's Reg King, and boasting a young Eddie Hardin in their line-up, this lone single tickled the lower reaches of the charts before Hardin joined The Spencer Davis Group.

The Game • It's Shocking What They Call Me
(A-side, Parlophone, February 1967)

Hailing from the South London/Surrey borders of Mitcham and Surrey, The Game boasted a 15-year-old singer and were produced by Kenny Lynch, presumably attempting to reproduce the success of The Small Faces. Lynch departed before The Game's third 45 'The Addicted Man' was banned by the beeb and instantly replaced with this ode to youthful defiance. It's without a doubt one of the most cacophonous, off-key '60s singles ever to appear on a major label. Shocking!

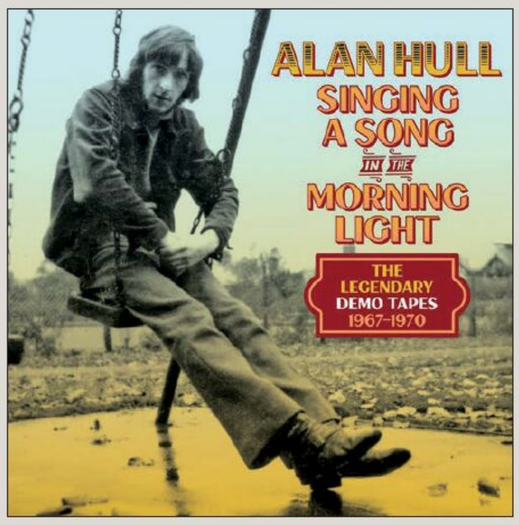
The Attack • Any More Than I Do
(B-side, Decca, March 1967)

Mod was clearly morphing into something more lysergic by 1967, and Earl's Court's The Attack carried the sound into a new era. 'Any More Than I Do' features Davy O'List's slashing guitar and raucous solo overlaid by Richard Shirman's soulful vocal. Managed by Don Arden, like The Small Faces they too should have hit the big time. Adored by John Peel, the B-side of their debut is high-octane mod perfection.

Jon 'Mojo' Mills and Andy Morten

White Light Fever

BEN PHILLIPSON glimpses into the mind of an unfairly-overlooked songwriting talent via a major cache of unheard demos



ALAN HULL

Singing A Song In The Morning Light: The Legendary Demo Tapes 1967-1970

★★★★

GRAPEFRUIT 4-CD BOX SET

For all their commercial success, Lindisfarne have always somehow underachieved in the credibility stakes. Yet, a world away from the dreaded novelty singles and TV-advertised party albums of the '80s and '90s, their best work placed them at the sweet halfway point between Faces-style bonhomie and the rootsy songcraft of The Band. In their prime, Lindisfarne had a songbook to rival either, and those songs were largely the work of Alan Hull.

The recent *Lindisfarne's Geordie Genius* documentary suggested that greater acceptance for Hull was due, illustrating a deeply compassionate man whose songs speak not only for who he was, but also grapple with wider concerns, resonating on a large scale with the people of the England's northeast in particular. Among insights from colleagues, fans, friends and family, there was recognition that Hull's early years were as rich as the more successful decade that followed. Almost entirely undocumented until now, *Singing A Song In The Morning Light* is a four-disc, 90-track deep dive into a prolific three-year period during which Hull tackled all manner of styles, with increasing precision.

Following a stint in London as part of The Chosen Few circa 1965, Hull returned to Tyneside, developing his songwriting, and fronting several ad-hoc local groups while also performing as a solo act at local folk clubs. This led to local publishing and management deals that gave him access to a demo studio in Newcastle. These perfectly imperfect recordings form the entirety of this set and while much information on the tracks themselves appear to have been lost to the mists of brown ale, they are presented here in an enjoyably coherent way, beginning with the entirely solo demo 'Here I Stand'. It's Zombies-style piano chords make it feel like something of a mid-60s off-kilter-pop archetype, and it's the first of many songs that would have made viable 45s given the full studio treatment. Similarly, the Bee Gees-ish 'Arthur McLean Morrison Jones' is a kitchen sink vignette that introduces a full band for the first of several fleshed-out recordings, including several period-piece psych excursions made with Skip Bifferty, Hull's former Chosen Few cohorts.

Over the course of the set there's the overall sense that Hull's singing and writing is growing its teeth and focus, and by the initial demo of 'Winter Song', his earlier debts to The Beatles and Ray Davies feel fairly irrelevant. Hull was working at a psychiatric hospital in Newcastle, by this point, which probably accounts for a uniquely empathetic song which considers society's downtrodden, long before it made fashionable subject matter. That song would find its audience early in the next decade on Lindisfarne's essential debut *Nicely Out Of Tune*, by which time Hull was sitting on the stack of songs contained herein, the band spoilt for choice. Hull's other contributions to that record are almost all here in nascent form: the Edgar Allan Poe-inspired 'Lady Eleanor', as well as two takes of the rambunctious police-bust anthem 'We Can Swing Together'. Best of all, the eternally uplifting 'Clear White Light' finally appears here in its bare-bones two-part entirety.

Going forwards, Hull's humanitarian and socialist principles would rarely waver, but these early songs are peppered with references to community and human frailty, in a way that is both poetic and non-judgemental. Another highlight, the sublime 'Somewhere Out There' captures the existential conundrum in a down-to-earth, but incredibly affecting way. That ability remained Hull's chief calling card and it is written large here on an incredible archive trawl that does real justice to his legacy.

"Hull was working at a psychiatric hospital in Newcastle, by this point, which probably accounts for a uniquely empathetic song which considers society's downtrodden, long before it made fashionable subject matter"

Alan Hull. You don't have to be mad to work here...

THE AMERICAN ANALOG SET
New Drifters
★★★★

NUMERO GROUP LP

The American Analog Set celebrate their early days with an atmospheric box set featuring their first three full-lengths (1996's *The Fun Of Watching Fireworks*, '97's *From Our Living Room To Yours* and '99's *The Golden Band)*, plus two additional albums gathering singles, demos and various rarities.

While they were making music in a state (Texas) known for its wild and loud sounds, the quartet were tucked away in the suburban home of guitarist Andrew Kenny's grandparents, free to establish their own microcosm of slow-burning dream-pop, lo-fi wistfulness and quietly textured indie-rock with gentle hints of psychedelic bliss. If you had to conjure a visual counterpart to these songs – whether they might be the sprawling impressionistic numbers that make up the first two records or the poppier delicacies found on *The Golden Band* – it would look a lot like a nature shot from Terrence Malick's *Days Of Heaven*.

Camilla Aisa

RAY BARRETTO
Indestructible
★★★★

CRAFT LATINO/FANIA LP

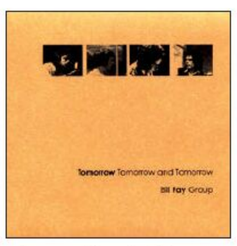
Ray Barretto didn't title his 1973 album *Indestructible* for nothing. Recorded in the wake of the break-up of The Ray Barretto Orchestra, who had accompanied the master *conguero* on a string of key albums during the previous five years, *Indestructible* can be seen as both a riposte and a statement of intent and endurance.

Here, reissued in a 50th anniversary edition with the original Fania pressing having been out of print for decades, the album finds Barretto leading his new *conjunto* of players with all the chops and verve you'd expect from a true salsa giant. The opening Santeria-infused 'El Hijo De Obatla' sets the tone for what follows with maestro 'Hard Hands' Barretto up front and centre laying down the band's omnipresent heartbeat. 'El Diablo' and 'La Familia' continue the pulsating forward momentum, which climaxes on the concluding burn-up of the title track on this sumptuous serving of classic New York salsa.

Grahame Bent

THE BILL FAY GROUP
Tomorrow, Tomorrow And Tomorrow
★★★

DEAD OCEANS 2-LP



Coming between his cult early '70s LPs on Deram and the mature, valedictory releases of the last decade or so, Bill Fay's third album is the outlier in his catalogue. Recorded between 1978 and '81 with jazz-rockers The Acme Quartet, these songs went unreleased until a 2005 CD and 2006 LP with slightly altered tracklist. This double album adds more outtakes, demos and alternate versions to create the definitive edition of a flawed masterpiece.

Your mileage on the "finished" songs originally intended for release will depend on your tolerance for late '70s jazz-fusion and prog textures, as well as Fay's sometimes preachy God-bothering. Raw jams like 'Just A Moon' and 'After The Revolution' have arguably aged better, their ragged, lo-fi qualities closer to Fay's original aesthetic. Best is the spacey soul of 'Cosmic Boxer', featured in two different versions here. A curate's egg, but one worth your perseverance.

Ben Graham

BRITISH LIONS
British Lions
★★★

THINK LIKE A KEY 2-CD

This is a classic case of a great band existing at the wrong time. Featuring former members of Mott The Hoople and Medicine Head, the level of musicianship is inarguable and the album is an upbeat and entertaining beast. Unfortunately, the prevailing punk attitudes were leading punters in a very different direction.

With some nifty keyboard work and an ear for a good cover version, their performance of Garland Jeffreys' 'Wild In The Streets' is thrilling in both studio and live takes, they were probably two years too late with their rock/glam hybrid. The live tracks included on the second CD show they could cut it on stage too, mixing their self-penned songs with gritty Chuck Berry compositions, it almost seems churlish to suggest that the medley of 'So You Want To Be A Rock 'n' Roll Star / It's Only Rock 'n' Roll / Pretty Vacant' vividly highlights the identity issues faced by the band.

Henry Hutton

COMET GAIN
Radio Sessions (BBC 1996-2011)
★★★★

TAPETE CD/LP

There's something inherently joyous, and beautifully rock 'n' roll about this set of BBC sessions by indie mavericks Comet Gain, led by guitarist/vocalist David Bower, all the while enduring a battalion of personnel changes and an ethos where often getting pissed conquered any notion of rehearsing.

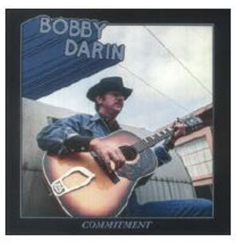
What's also amazing, as demonstrated across these 15 tracks recorded over as many years, is how uniform the sound is, as well as the performances being crisp, fresh and – not to put too fine a point on it – punk as fuck in the truest sense!

Charging from the speakers first is 'Say Yes! Kaleidoscope Sound!', a fine tonic that showcases superb vocals and thrilling spikes of trebly guitar. 'Pier Angeli' could be one of the finest songs yet to court Velvet Underground lovers, and there are cool gear changes too with 'Strip Poker' and 'I Can't Believe' featuring Sarah Bleach on vocals. They get pretty angsty too, as on 'Chain Smoking' and 'Young Lions'. Cool Seeds nod to finish on too.

Lenny Helsing

BOBBY DARIN
Commitment
★★★★

DIRECTION LP



In 1968, crooner Bobby Darin, disillusioned with the changing social fabric of America, ditched the glamour of Vegas to get it together in an isolated trailer near Big Sur. Until now, his '69 album *Commitment* has proved hard to come by, but a reissue campaign by the Darin estate has finally put this right.

Commitment is an alt-country classic similar in style to cult albums by Donnie Fritts, Bobby Charles and Jim Ford. The funky 'Me & Mr Homer' is pure barbequed country-funk. 'Sugar Man', 'Song For A Doller', 'The Harvest' and 'Distractions (Part 1)' are cut from a similar denim cloth. You can easily imagine Gene Clark singing the moody folk-rock of 'Sausalito (The Governors Song)'. The slow burning 'Maybe We Can Get It Together', complete with gospel choir, is the pick of the excellent bonus tracks. Comes with revised artwork and touching sleeve notes from Darin Junior.

Paul Ritchie

THE DOLLY ROCKER MOVEMENT
Our Days Mind The Tyme
★★★★

BAD AFRO LP

Part of the vital Australian garage and psychedelic scene, the band were relatively late to the party forming in 2002 and performing with the likes of The Lime Spiders and The Stems. They released a handful of seven-inches and two albums before they split in 2013.

Our Days Mind The Tyme (2009) was arguably the band's best album. From the opening 'Only One' and its rocking follow up 'Sold For Sinners', Daniel Poulter's Marc Bolan-infused vocals add a distinct flavour to the fuzz 'n' Farfisa backing characterising the band's sound in a manner that marked them apart from the many also-ran, mop-top revivalists. 'A Sound For Two' adds some beautiful harpsichord and strings, while 'Enjoy A Paranoia' and 'The Ecstasy Once Told' stride into a desert sunrise with epic choral backing and Morricone-like guitar. This purple vinyl reissue of the album should satisfy those unable to obtain a copy first time around.

Richard Allen

LISTEN TO THE
SHINDIG!
BROADCAST
ON MIXCLOUD

reviews then

FAMILY
Bandstand
★★★★

ESOTERIC CD

Debuting a brand-new streamlined logo and featuring a slightly different line-up from their previous albums, *Bandstand* showcases Roger Chapman's trademark warble on both the more soulful elements of their repertoire and tracks that wouldn't have sounded out of place on their debut disc *Music In A Doll's House*.

The title track placed the group in the charts once again following the success of 'In My Own Time' and is a grinding, funky tale of a drunken night out in Chapman's home town – at the other end of the scale, the gentle, acoustic 'My Friend The Sun', which inexplicably wasn't a hit, echoes the pastoral feel of the group's earlier work. There are lyrical contrasts here too, with the band at one moment spewing vitriol over the class system and in another addressing the kind of kitchen sink drama beloved of The Kinks. Also included are some interesting demos and rarities including a bunch of slightly muddy BBC sessions.

Henry Hutton

GHOST
Ghost / Second Time Around / Temple Stone
ALL ★★★★

ALL DRAG CITY LPS

Ghost emerged in 1991 with an atmospheric, slow-burning and enigmatic self-titled album that seemed to raise the question, what if Amon Düül were born some 20 years later in Japan? The music unleashed by the debut together with *Second Time Around* and *Temple Stone* (released in 1992 and '97, respectively) required full focus, a near-meditative disposition.

Since then, the attention span of the average listener has only drastically dropped. Hearing those albums now that they are finally being repressed by the good folks at Drag City might feel more demanding than it did back in the day – which ultimately makes it a fascinating exercise in recalibrating our sense of time and absorption. For the sonic world conjured by Ghost – jam-fuelled acid-folk with a mystical balance of the beatific and the noisy – is eager to freeze time altogether, and let both players and listeners get lost in thought, contemplation and hallucination.

Camilla Aisa

ALLEN GINSBERG
Material Wealth: Allen's Voice In Poems And Songs 1956-1996
★★★

REAL GONE MUSIC LP

Along with William Burroughs and Jack Kerouac, Allen Ginsberg is remembered as one of The Holy Trinity of The Beat Generation, and he sure did squeeze a lot of living into his 70 years on this earthly plane.

This new CD both draws from and adds to the long out-of-print 4-CD Rhino box set *Holy Soul Jelly Roll: Songs & Poems 1949-1993* and is as good an introduction to Ginsberg's work as you could wish for. With the expressive percussion of Elvin Jones underpinning the angry anti-war verses, opener 'Hum Bom' from 1984 makes the link between beat-poetry and jazz explicit, while the collaborations with Bob Dylan across the decades are less intense, but will doubtless be of interest to completists. Elsewhere, William Blake's 'Grey Monk' is reimagined as a Celtic-Indian drone and Ginsberg's 'Kaddish' is a beautiful love song to both his mother, who suffered terribly from mental health issues, and to his home, New York City.

Hugh Dellar

JOHN ST FIELD
Control
★★★★

GUERSSEN LP

Before forming cult favourites Doll By Doll ("We were a bunch of bastards but we made some great albums"), Jackie Leven recorded this pseudonymous debut (in 1971, aged 20) but it was only released in Spain with little fanfare and even fewer sales. Coming full circle 50 years later, Spanish imprint Guerssen reissues the gatefold album with original artwork, rare photos and memorabilia.

Written and recorded under the influence of copious amounts of LSD (especially evident on the self-indulgent, effects-laden 'Dune Voices' and lengthy prog jam 'The Problem' featuring Joe Kučera's brilliant flute solo) it foreshadows the singer-songwriter style of his subsequent solo albums. Leven's storytelling talents emerge on tracks with soft progressive undertones like 'Soft Lowland Tongue', double-tracked vocal harmonies highlight the tender acoustic ballad 'I'm Always A Prinlaws Boy', and 'Mansion Tension' projects a weary, stoned Neil Young vibe. A perfect introduction to this criminally underrated performer.

Jeff Penczak

AGUSTIN PEREYRA LUCENA
Agustin Pereyra Lucena
★★★★

FAR OUT RECORDINGS CD/LP

Thoroughly immersed in the dreamy seductive intricacies of classic bossa nova, Argentinean guitarist Agustin Pereyra Lucena's self-titled 1970 debut is imbued with such authenticity that it feels like it could have been recorded at the height of the original bossa boom of the early to mid-60s.

Accompanied by a superb Argentinean rhythm section and singer Elena Uriburu, the tight-knit group is tailor made for the album's consummately delivered repertoire of bossa classics, which includes Baden Powell & Vinicius De Moraes' 'O Astronauta', 'Consolacao', 'Berimbau' and 'Canto De Ossanha', alongside Antonio Carlos Jobim's 'Samba Do Aviao'. No less an authority than the great Vinicius De Moraes himself observed in the album's sleeve notes, "I never saw, with the exception of Baden Powell and Toquinho, anyone more linked to his instrument than Agustin Pereyra Lucena." As accolades go that's as good as it could get.

Grahame Bent

LUNAR DUNES
Galaxsea
★★★

DUNE 2-LP

Treatment was one of the great unsung bands of the '80s UK psychedelic underground scene, a band that defied both categorisation and their own audience. Guitarist Adam Blake went on to work with Cornershop and then between 2008 and 2011 teamed up with drummer Hamilton Lee (Transglobal Underground) and bassist Ian Blackaby on a project that looked to krautrock and Miles Davis, developing a trippy instrumental space music that has since become a cult pleasure.

Their 2011 album has long been out of print, but now available on vinyl it reveals itself as a wondrous mash up of trippy acid-rock, lounge moves and spacey deep bass dives. 'Eastern Promise' is a noteworthy excursion, sounding at times like *Shamal*-era Gong, yet far more languid, whilst 'Off World Beacon' features the Dorothy Ashby-like harp of Julia Thornton and beautifully understated feedback guitar courtesy of Mr Blake. An entrancing collection.

Richard Allen

WIL MALONE
Old Feet, New Socks: The Many Faces Of Wil Malone 1965-72
★★★★

MORGAN BLUE TOWN 3-CD BOX SET

Several lifetimes before he became a world-class arranger and producer, Wil Malone earned his stripes singing and playing drums with a series of '60s beat groups and pop aggregations before finding his niche as a musical polymath and backroom technician at London's Morgan Studios.

This long overdue anthology of Malone's work during those exceptionally prolific and productive years is admirable in its scope and mirrors the changing fads of the day – from Beach Boys-indebted harmony-pop through stoned psychedelia to exquisite art-rock. There's much to recommend this to those dilettantes who don't already own albums and anthologies by The Orange Bicycle, Bobak Jons Malone, Fickle Pickle, The Smoke and Wil's gorgeous eponymous 1970 outing. The leftovers – much of which are exclusive to this set– consist largely of ad-hoc studio experiments, demos and cash-in cover versions recorded under various pseudonyms during the wee small hours that add little to the multi-talented Malone's canon.

Andy Morten

MAJOR ARCANA
Major Arcana
★★★★

OUT-SIDER LP

A sought-after cult favourite for lovers of psychedelic folk, the rather mysterious Major Arcana's first and only long-player was originally released on Milwaukee's A Major Label in 1976. Still, its sound and philosophy were resolutely rooted in the previous decade.

Major Arcana was the brainchild of Jim Spencer, joined in the studio by an ensemble of like-minded players. Spencer's musical

Continues over

a cellarful of soul

PAUL RITCHIE gets down with the latest soul and funk titles, old and new

D-I-S-C-O is the prevailing theme this month, and as divisive as this may appear, there's no doubting the enduring popularity of mirrorball dance culture. The likes of Say She She are bringing the glam and deep grooves of disco back into vogue. For better or worse, disco bridged the gap between soul, funk and house music. Few encapsulated that initial transition better than **ARCHIE BELL & THE DRELLS**. Starting out as a southern funk outfit they adapted better than most to the changing scene, morphing into a super-slick Philly disco act. **The Albums 1968-1979** (★★★★, ROBINSONGS 5-CD BOX SET) is a glitzy retrospective featuring the seven albums they recorded for Atlantic and Philadelphia International plus a bonus disc of non-album tracks. Their second Atlantic album remains a solid funk and soul set. 'Don't Let Love Get You Down', 'Let's Groove' and 'Where Will You Go When The Party's Over' from their disco period remain evergreen classics.

Staying on a Philly tip, the session drummer behind hundreds of disco records was "the man with 10 arms", **EARL YOUNG**. **Groove Machine: The Earl Young Drum Sessions** (★★★★, KENT CD) doubles as a who's who of the soul and disco era. Young – widely recognised as the inventor of the four on the floor rhythm pattern – became one of the leading figures in the Gamble & Huff-produced Philly Soul story before absconding to Salsoul, as showcased here across a set of seminal grooves, from 'Backstabbers' to 'Be Thankful'.

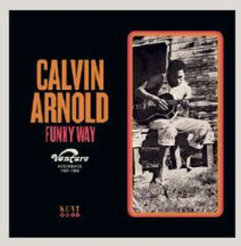
Continuing the disco theme, and in true *Shindig!* style, we go a little deeper. **Can You Feel It? Volume 4: Modern Soul, Disco & Boogie 1976-85** (★★★, TRAMP LP) includes plenty of oddities for hungry crate-diggers, from cheap bargain bin finds to more expensive rarities, including hard hitting street-funk rhythms with a message from Frankie Staton, deep bass-heavy grooves from the heart of Jackson, Mississippi (the mysterious Chatham) and motoring electronic boogie from Kim McCrae.

Another relatively unknown disco act was **MARYANN FARRA AND SATIN SOUL**. **Never Gonna Leave You** (★★★, REAL GONE LP) was initially released in 1976 on the Brunswick label

Fever diva Marie Queenie Lyons

and has since become something of a cult classic for disco heads. Produced by disco maestro Tony Valor, with arrangements by Chi-Soul legend Eugene Record, and mixed by Tom Moulton, it features a great version of The Chi-Lites' 'Stoned Out of My Mind' and other swirling, up-tempo Latin-tinged dancefloor grooves.

It's now time to unzip those disco boots and turn our attention back to funk and soul. And what better way to start than a rip-roaring funk monster from James Brown protégé **MARIE QUEENIE LYONS**. If you're not familiar with her steamy version of 'Fever' then you must check out **Soul Fever** (★★★★, VAMPISOUL LP). This 1970 treat gets a welcome reboot for those of us who had forgotten the sanctified power and fiery majesty behind the enigmatic singer's sole release. This version includes a booklet with rare photos, extensive liner notes and the first ever interview with Queenie herself.



Guitarist and singer **CALVIN ARNOLD** recorded for Venture, a short-lived MGM subsidiary, founded by Motown alumni Mickey Stevenson. 'Funky Way' was his big hit and is collected on **Funky Way: Venture Recordings 1967-69** (★★★★, KENT CD) alongside a dozen additional greasy "southern fried" dancers. Fans of fellow Atlanta natives The Mighty Hannibal, Lee Moses and Hermon Hitson will enjoy the raw funky edge Arnold brought to his own songs.

Free Will (★★★★, BGP LP) was the third Flying Dutchman release by **GIL SCOTT-HERON**. It combined five soulful songs with seven topical spoken word poems. This new vinyl pressing promises the best possible sound quality via AAA technology. The words Gil wrote in 1972 tackled the many social injustices faced by Black Americans. He also spoke directly about personal responsibility, self-reliance and pride with both humour and pathos.

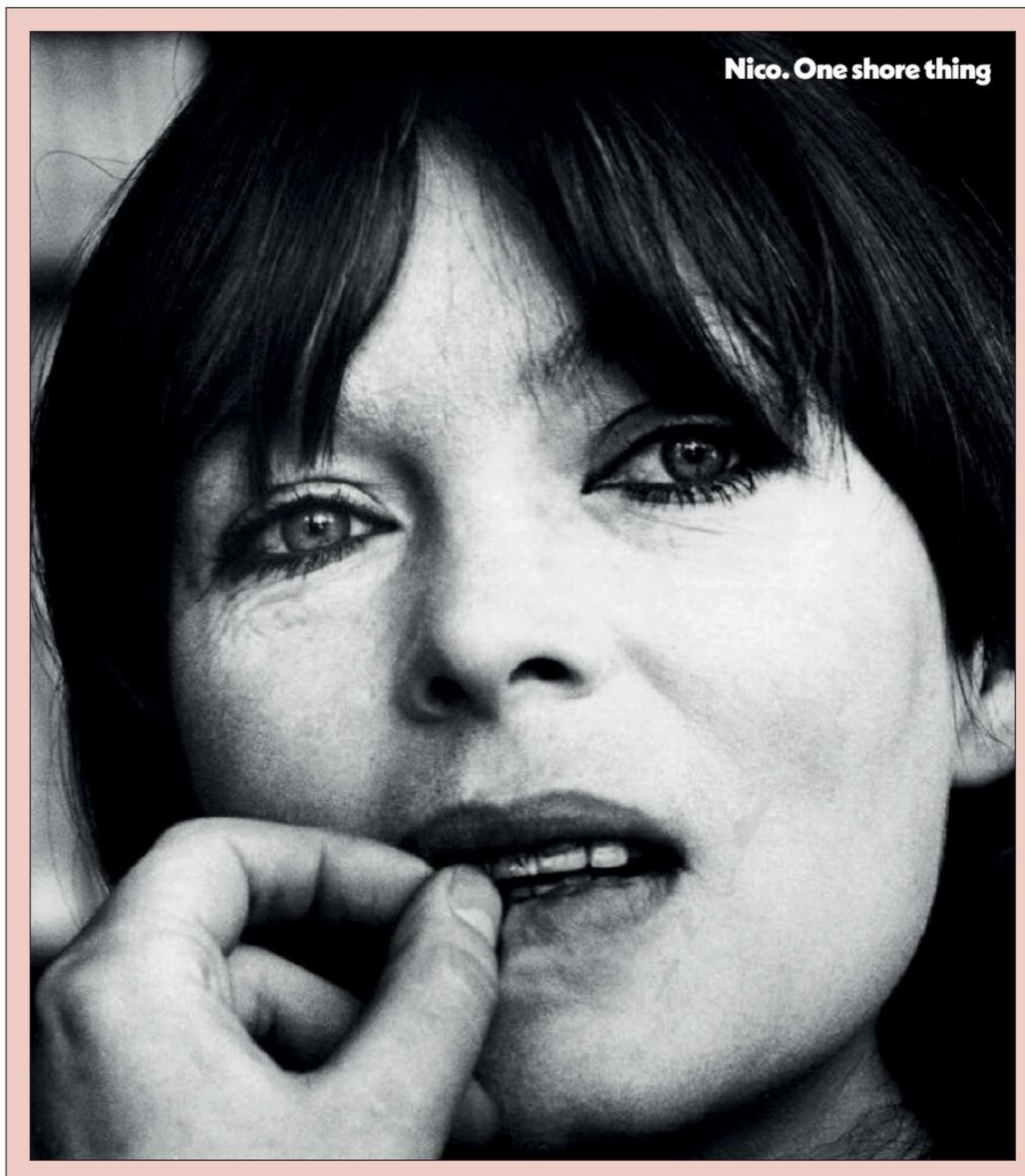
Going further back, stylistically at least, **SKIP MAHOANEY & THE CASUALS** were purveyors of laid-back soul balladry. **Your Funny Moods** (★★★★, NUMERO GROUP LP) was originally issued in 1974 but their tight harmony-soul sound and gospel-tinged lead vocals could have originated from a decade earlier. The slow simmering 'I Need Your Love' is a sublime slice of atmospheric harmony-soul. It's no surprise to hear this record is big on the Chicano Lowrider Scene.

Speaking of which, **THEE SINSEERS** are a contemporary soul act from California. Their sound is steeped in the oldies soul tradition. The tracks on *Sinseerly Yours* (★★★, COLEMINE CD/LP) could easily fit next to the Skip Mahoaney album. The mood and atmosphere perfectly capture the golden era of vintage early '60s R&B. 'Keep On Calling' and 'Can't Call Me Baby' are especially sumptuous soft-soul ballads but the whole album is cut from the same well-tailored cloth.

Dutch band **THE TIBBS** play their brand of authentic '60s soul in a more up-tempo, funky style. *Keep It To Yourself* (★★★, RECORD KICKS LP) is their third album. Featuring the sultry vocals of Roxanne Hartog and a funky southern soul styled line-up of drums, guitar, bass, organ and a three-piece horn section. Lively soul stompers like 'Ain't It Funny' and 'Can't Teach An Old Dog New Tricks' are guaranteed to keep the party hearty, whilst soul ballads like 'In Orbit' add diversity.

Joel Ricci aka Lucky Brown is the musician behind **THE FUNK REVOLUTION**. His 2011 home recordings have been repackaged as a two-part set. **Don't Go Away** and **Space Dream** (BOTH ★★★, BOTH TRAMP LPS) were inspired by the likes of Poets Of Rhythm and the nascent deep-funk scene. Expect authentic JB's styled heavy slabs of funk and sample heavy breakbeats with funky drumming, stabbing horn lines, groovy Hammond and chicken scratch guitars galore.

A Trip To The Moon (★★★★, COLEMINE CD/LP) is the fifth album from **GHOST FUNK ORCHESTRA**. A concept album of sorts with sound bites from actual NASA audio transmissions interspersed between tracks of trippy cinematic soul, loungecore, freeform jazz and psychedelic funk breaks. It's a total trip with all sorts going on for the heads – from David Axelrod inspired productions to straight ahead celestial soul-pop. Check out the *Barbarella* meets Dennis Coffey vibes on 'Helios' and prepare for lift off into the cosmos.



I Don't Want To Go To Chelsea

NICO
The Marble Index
Desertshore

BOTH ★★★★★

BOTH DOMINO CD/LP

We have much to thank Jim Morrison for when it comes to popular music – not least his suggestion that German singer Nico ditch recording covers, learn an instrument and start writing her own songs. Disappointed with 1967 solo debut *Chelsea Girl*, Nico took his advice to heart, and before long the harmonium had become her instrument of choice, giving birth to a unique musical aesthetic that flows throughout *The Marble Index* and *Desertshore*.

Nico's story is well-known. After dabbling in the worlds of modelling and acting, she moved to Manhattan where she fell in with Andy Warhol's Factory crowd and was swiftly paired up with the artist's new band for an infamously short-lived collaboration that nevertheless produced the seminal *The Velvet Underground & Nico*.

Following the ballad-laden interlude of *Chelsea Girl*, '68's *The Marble Index* could not have been more of a departure – ushering in a new phase of modern European *avant-garde* positioned on Nico's new-found songwriting ability, her Brechtian vocal, the harmonium drone and, of course, the guidance of Velvets counterpart, the classically-trained John Cale. Brief intro notwithstanding, 'Lawn Of Dawns' instantly introduces this unfamiliar plaintive sound propelled by harmonium and glockenspiel. 'No One Is There' and 'Facing The Wind' feature Cale's all-important viola and piano, respectively, but the album's centrepiece is 'Frozen Warnings', a haunting composition that bonds pipe organ, harmonium and Nico's melancholic lyrics. And for anyone who doubts the quality of her voice, take a listen to 'Nibelungen'.

Naturally it was a commercial flop, but Nico didn't bat an eyelid and continued in the same vein two years later, Cale still by her side. *Desertshore* opens with the immense 'Janitor Of Lunacy' (about ex-lover Brian Jones) setting out her stall with aplomb. Possibly heavier than its predecessor, see 'Mutterlein' and glorious closer 'All That Is My Own', 'The Falconer' (about Andy Warhol's shooting) is elevated by Cale's piano and there are other exquisite moments of tenderness. Her young son Ari appears on 'My Petit Chevalier', while 'Afraid' offers a heartrending melody all the more poignant by Cale's viola and piano. Two masterpieces – equal parts challenging and devastating.

Sarah Gregory

references were broad and utterly invested in '60s hippiedom – at times, the resulting songs conjure the druggy psych haze of HP Lovecraft; at others, they make a bluesy stand. On 'Deanna Durbin Blues', Spencer resembles John Sebastian, while 'Papa Doc' evokes Dr John. The stand-out is certainly 'Western Wind', the finest slice of hypnotic West Coast acid-folk ever made in Wisconsin. This is the first time the album has been officially reissued; a limited red vinyl edition comes with a 3D sheet of underground cartoonist Denis Kitchen's memorable sleeve.

Camilla Aisa

MELLOW CANDLE
Swaddling Songs

★★★★★

DERAM LP

Another outing for this hugely collectable 1972 prog-folk monster – good news for those of you who missed the 2020 RSD remaster (of which this is a black vinyl repress), can't find the Acme or Rise Above editions, and don't have five grand with which to invest in an original pressing.

The album deserves its fearsome reputation. It's a bewitching dozen, at once mystical, medieval and muscular, with the careening vocal harmonies of Alison Williams and Clodagh Simonds bringing a Celtic otherworldliness to a set of shape-shifting progressive rock songs. This isn't airy fairy stuff – drums, electric bass and guitar are in abundance – but the songs at the album's heart ('Silver Song', 'Messenger Birds', 'Reverend Sisters') have more in common with the piano-led confessionals of Sandy Denny's solo debut and Shelagh McDonald's *Album* than they do with any notion of hairy alpha males getting off on being able to play in 7/8 time. Grab one while they last.

Andy Morten

THE MYSTIC TIDE
Frustration

★★★★★

NUMERO GROUP LP

Given that their best 45 sides were comped by Eva back in the '80s and Distortions Records in the early '90s, it's safe to assume many readers will already be familiar with the adrenaline kick sonic thrill of the title track here. Written by Long Island teen prodigy lead guitarist Joe Docko, it's acid-punk of the highest order. It roars along at a ferocious pace and is interspersed with solos that hit like Egyptian surf music on amphetamines. Dark and dangerous stuff.

'Psychedelic Journey Parts 1 & 2' takes this basic idea and pushes it even further out. Imagine Dick Dale has been spiked in the casbah and you're getting close. Elsewhere, 'Running Through The Night' is minor key Merseybeat put through the mixer with surf-noir and sheer sonic ferocity. 'Mystic Eyes' isn't a Them cover, but an anguished, spooked-out, tremolo-laden basement ballad, and we've hardly even scratched the surface. Essential stuff.

Hugh Dellar

THE NUTHINS
1 Step Forward... Further Steps

★★★

DETOUR CD

This is our esteemed editor Jon 'Mojo' Mills' former group, which began as the '90s dawned and split before the decade ended. Their look and sound owed much to the US '60s, as well as those mad mod sounds all the long-haired R&B-style groups from UK, Netherlands and beyond were then making.

There are many good cuts on this, an expanded edition of their sole album *1 Step Beyond* (Twist, 1996) which stand head and shoulders above the majority of similar acts; examples include impressive openers 'Ain't Gonna Miss Ya' and 'Next Of Kin', a tidy Beatles cover in 'You've Got To Hide Your Love Away' plus their swan-song, the Byrds-tinged, well-executed 'Thoughts And Visions'.

Their chuck-everything-at the-wall approach – tackling garage, folk-punk, psych, R&B plus surf instrumentals – is when things become somewhat unstuck. Had The Nuthins been able to concentrate more on their strengths as outlined above, and enjoyed more stability over the years, who knows how things could've turned out?

Lenny Helsing

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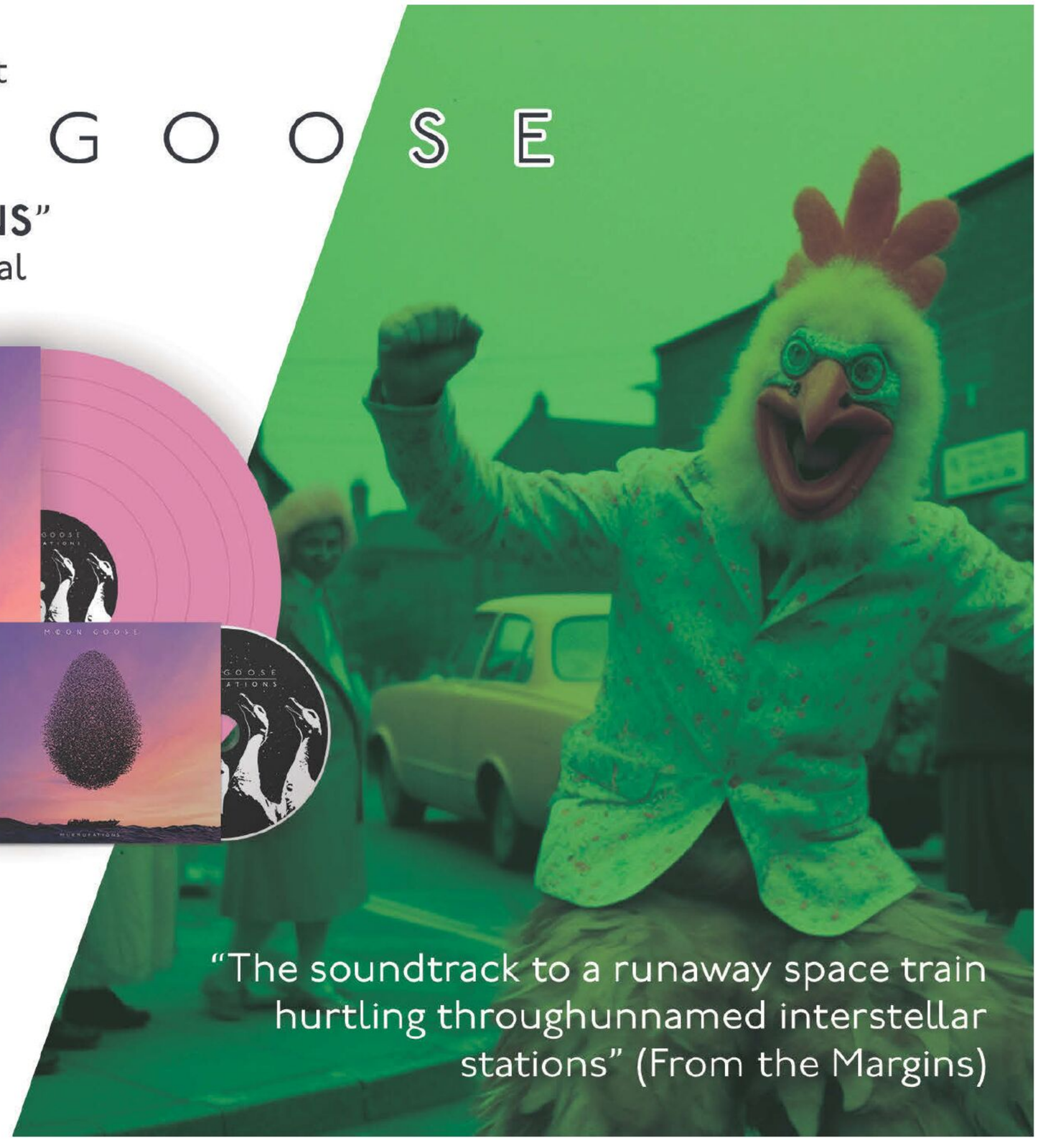


Fruupp. Prog-pop royalty

It Was 50 Years Ago Today

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Patterns On The Window: The British Progressive Pop Sounds of 1974
★★★

GRAPEFRUIT 3-CD BOX SET

Be neither turned on nor put off by the P-word in the subtitle, as the theme of this latest Grapefruit release appears simply to be anything that *wasn't* a chartbuster in 1974 (although hits that didn't hang around, like Fox's 'Only You' and Cozy Powell's 'Na Na Na', are included). If your musical memories of that year are clogged with Mud, Terry Jacks, Sylvia, Paper Lace and their ilk, then *Patterns On The Window* provides a partial passport into an intriguing parallel universe.

There are post-glam offerings from T Rex and Slade; late-to-the-party glam stompers from Hello and Fancy; art-rock from Be-Bop Deluxe and Sparks; pub-rock stalwarts such as Dr Feelgood and Brinsley Schwarz; hard rocking from UFO and Nazareth; folk-pop from Ian Matthews and Richard & Linda Thompson; blues from Jona Lewie and Dana Gillespie; and, yes, even some prog, courtesy of Procol Harum and Fruupp. There's also a range of unclassifiables, including Medicine Head, John Cale and the sing-along-a-suicide of Simon Turner's 'She Was Just A Young Girl'.

Everyone's mileage will of course vary when it comes to these clam collections, but this writer enjoyed Ronnie Wood's Stonesy reggae-tinged 'I Can Feel The Fire', the Feelgoods' ever-incendiary 'Roxette', Slade's lilting 'Far Far Away', Mick Ronson's wonderfully melodramatic 'Billy Porter', the Sunday morning soul of Tramp's 'Put A Record On', and the pre-watershed sleaze of Fancy's 'Touch Me'. I do like me some Fruupp, so the inclusion of their 'Prince Of Heaven' is appreciated, but my pick of the pops is Ronnie Lane's lovely, pastoral 'The Poacher'.

I also had fun arguing with David Wells' otherwise impeccable liner notes. T Rex's 'Venus Loon' should have replaced 'Teenage Dream' as *Zinc Alloy's* lead single? Patently absurd. SAHB's *Next* was better than *The Impossible Dream*? Oh lordy, how preposterous.

Back to that "partial passport" phrase in my first paragraph. Unusually for a Grapefruit box, this has a high bland quota, with far too many of the tracks on offer sounding as if they would have been perfectly happy sitting next to Sylvia in the Tuesday afternoon chart rundown.

Peter Gallagher

PENTANGLE
Reunions: Live & BBC Sessions 1982-2011
★★★★

CHERRY TREE 4-CD BOX SET

Pentangle recorded a series of pioneering albums fusing folk, jazz and blues in the late '60s and early '70s. A reincarnation of the band fronted by original vocalist Jacqui McShee performs to this day but there were periodic reunions of the original quintet, as showcased on this handsomely packaged four-disc collection.

Disc One gathers numerous reunion performances for BBC radio that include an unusual appearance as a four-piece without injured drummer Terry Cox, and Sir David Attenborough discussing the band as though they were wildlife specimens as he presents them with a lifetime achievement award. The second disc consists of recordings from two performances on an Italian tour in '82 with some rare solo performances, McShee singing an unaccompanied version of 'A Bold Young Farmer' and John Renbourn picking a ragtime tune. Discs Three and Four feature the band's previously available but rousing performance at The Royal Festival Hall in 2008.

Clive Webb

PODER DEL ALMA
Poder Del Alma
Poder Del Alma II
BOTH ★★★★

BOTH PHARAWAY SOUNDS LP

Assembled from an all-star pool of musicians to open for Santana at a benefit concert for victims of the 1972 Managua earthquake, thankfully this didn't prove to be a one-off appearance and the nine-piece Poder Del Alma (Soul Power) went on become one of the best loved Nicaraguan acts of the '70s.

Recorded in Guatemala a matter of months after the Managua benefit, Poder Del Alma's assured eponymous '74 debut is a potent pot-pourri of Santana-esque rock, soul, jazz and contemporary Latin influences. Fast forward two years and the band's rarely seen second album *Poder Del Alma II* was recorded in Costa Rica with a re-shuffled line-up and the same high end levels of performance. Considered to be a Holy Grail of Afro-Latin rock, the album captures the reconfigured collective firing on all available cylinders.

Grahame Bent

SONGS
Vertigo
★★★

GUERSSEN LP

Vertigo's seven tracks collect together Songs' previously unreleased private recordings from 1973-75, which intriguingly straddle prog, psych, acid-rock and folk-psych. Primarily a recording project with complex compositional styles Songs was a short-lived West Coast trio that included members of Asgard, Stow Lake and John Cipollina's Free Light among its members.

Attempting to accurately pin down Songs' signature sound proves tricky, thanks to the trio's habit of freely shifting genres. While the opening 'Vertigo' and the heavily phased 'Too Much, Too Fast' comfortably fit the acid-rock template, they're only part of the story, with 'Songs (For Craig)', 'Song For Me' and 'On This Day' coming swathed in trippy, mellow vibes. Legend has it that Songs submitted four recordings under different names for a local Sacramento radio station's song contest and came first, second and fourth without the judges twigging it was the work of the same band.

Grahame Bent

SUPERFINE DANDELION
Superfine Dandelion
★★★

SUNDAZED LP

You'd be hard-pressed to find a better example of the precise moment when West Coast psychedelic bands started getting interested in country-rock. 'Time Between' by The Byrds? No – that was the evolution (love it or hate it) of a folk-rock band, not a bunch of psychsters.

Superfine Dandelion were a quartet from Phoenix, Arizona. Songwriter/guitarist/singer Mike McFadden and original bassist

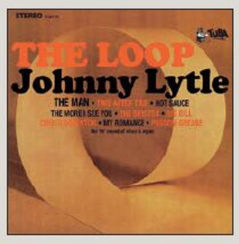
Continues over

tune up

THOMAS PATTERSON checks out a bumper crop of bop in his selection of new old jazz

It's a new year but all our gear this month is old, and we kick things off with an absolute belter in the shape of **Live At IUCC** (PURE PLEASURE, ★★★★ LP) by **HORACE TAPSCOTT WITH THE PAN-AFRIKAN PEOPLES ARKESTRA**, a jazz treasure recorded at LA's Immanuel United Christ Church circa 1979, originally released on the Nimbus West label and now given Pure Pleasure's typically high-quality reissue treatment. Pianist and composer Tapscott never found the fame during his lifetime that he deserved, but this album, full of lithe spiritual-jazz and frantic post-post-bop anchored by freaky flutes and sax is a true testament to both his talent and that of his patron, Nimbus West's owner Tom Albach. A beauty.

More underground jazz with **Black Jazz Records: The Complete Singles** (★★★★, REAL GONE MUSIC LP), a terrific round-up of cuts from the Oakland, California label that put out 20 killer albums in the early '70s from the likes of Doug Carn, Walter Bishop Jr and label founder Gene Russell, who also provides the opening piano-led 'Making Bread', which comes on like Ramsey Lewis with added swagger. Other highlights include Calvin Johnson's spiritual groover 'Gee-Gee' and the Hammond heavy 'Power House' from Chester Thompson, all rounded out with liner notes from ever dependable musician and historian Pat Thomas. (As an aside, we'll be featuring a new album from band Mushroom on Thomas' own Heyday Again label in our next jazz column).



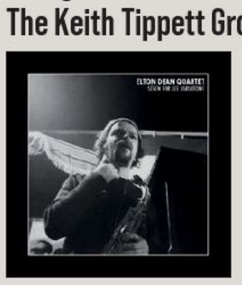
Vibraphone vibes with two offerings from **JOHNNY LYTLE: The Loop** (★★★★, BGP LP) and **People And Love** (★★★★, CRAFT RECORDINGS LP). Recorded in 1965, *The Loop* has the relaxed atmosphere of a sophisticated cocktail party in *Mad Men*-era America, even occasionally straying into exotica territory on easy-going cuts such as the opening title track (the 45 of which even hung around the *Billboard* 100 in '66). *People And Love*, meanwhile, was released only seven years later but demonstrates that the times definitely had a-changed, being a sequence of top-drawer soul-jazz with a downtempo sound that sports a sultry take on the Roberta Flack/Donny Hathaway classic 'Where Is The Love?'. Both are worth your time, depending on whether your drug of choice is best served rolled or chilled with a twist.

Back to 1958 and **Portrait Of Art Farmer** (★★★★, CRAFT RECORDINGS LP) from trumpeter **ART FARMER**, voted "New Star" of the year in the '58 poll from jazz, blues and beyond magazine *DownBeat*, fact fans. This is seriously cool jazz, a mixture of originals and covers of standards like 'The Very Thought Of You', knocked out of the park by the crack team of pianist Hank Jones, bassist Addison Farmer, and drummer Roy Haynes (an absolute legend, who is incredibly still with us, as he heads towards his centenary). With nary a note wasted, it's unsurprising this elegant set is often listed as one of the essential jazz albums of the '50s and '60s.

Speaking of essential sets from the '60s, how about **CHARLES MINGUS**'s **Mingus Takes Manhattan – The Complete Birdland Dates: 1961-1962** (★★★★, NEW LAND 4-LP), a dynamite selection of live cuts from the bassist alongside a rotating cast including Yusef Lateef, Roland Kirk and Booker Ervin. Previously available as a bootleg recording, this is now officially reissued, cleaned up from dusty old reel-to-reels and sounding remarkable, a potent moment in time that captured Mingus at his blistering best as he steers a course for such studio classics *Oh Yeah* and *The Black Saint And The Sinner Lady*. An enthralling set, with the small caveat that this was reviewed via (great sounding) digital files, so we can't testify to the quality of the vinyl pressing – which at around £130 a pop ain't exactly chump change.

To él Records and another of their typically eccentric compilations. **Before Brillo Box Or Banana: Music Within The Album Cover Art Of Andy Warhol** (★★★★, ÉL 4-CD BOX SET) is exactly that, a four CD set of numbers from records that sported cover art by Andy Warhol when he was still a commercial artist working for labels like RCA and Blue Note, before his time as pop artist extraordinaire. Here we have classical cuts from Rossini and Prokofiev nestling up against jazz from Count Basie, Moondog and Artie Shaw, and best of all, a fourth CD which veers away from the central theme to provide ace tracks that would have soundtracked Warhol's life at the time, from John Cage, Gunther Schuller, Lenny Bruce etc. It's a beautifully sprawling set, one that in a just world would come with a lavish coffee table book of Warhol's artwork, to which no CD-sized booklet can do true justice.

Space runs tight, so it's a quick stop in Cuba with a jazz-funk set of the highest order from 1976 and **GRUPO IRAKERE**'s **Grupo Irakere** (★★★★, MR BONGO CD/LP). Opener 'Chequeré-Son' conquers the dancefloor with Afro-Cuban grooves galore, presaging Latin hip-shakers-a-go-go and a wigged-out guitar-heavy closing cut 'Iya' that almost out-Santanas Santana. Fab. Finally, three live sets. The first two are from label British Progressive Jazz, who brought us one of our favourite releases of last year, The Keith Tippett Group's *How Long This Time? Live 1970*. Tippett crops up on **ELTON DEAN QUARTET**'s **Seven For Lee Variations: Italian Roads, Vol 2** (★★★, BRITISH PROGRESSIVE JAZZ DIGITAL), a bonkers offering from saxophonist Dean and co. recorded in Milan in '79. This is abrasive *avant-garde* stuff (it must've been great to watch!), one for those moments you need to scrub your mind with one of those Warhol-style Brillo pads. From nine years earlier, we have **MIKE OSBORNE**'s **Starting Fires: Live At The 100 Club 1970** (★★★, BRITISH PROGRESSIVE JAZZ CD), slightly less abrasive but no less challenging, from Osborne, fellow sax man Alan Skidmore, and the same rhythm section as on Elton Dean's set, Harry Miller and Louis Moholo. Again, not a relaxing listen, but one we're glad has been rescued from Osborne's personal collection. And recorded just down the road, *Live At Ronnie Scott's 1964* (★★★★, GEARBOX CD/2-LP) on which the great tenor saxophonist **JOHNNY GRIFFIN** is backed by the equally great Stan Tracey on piano. The recording is a little muddy at times, but the playing is never less than explosive, and it's always a treat to hear the inimitable Tracey live, no matter the situation, no matter the fidelity.



Mandy Rice-Davies jumps on the '60s pop bandwagon

London Look

VARIOUS ARTISTS
You Can Walk Across It On The Grass: The Boutique Sounds Of Swinging London
★★★★

GRAPEFRUIT 3-CD BOX SET

An eclectic zeitgeist of recordings – 92 in total – that encapsulate London when it was viewed as the epicentre of The Swinging '60s, the latest Grapefruit collection has a bit of everything for those who are keenly tuned in to that era.

From big pop hits like The Kinks' 'Dedicated Follower Of Fashion' (how could they not include this iconic track?) to The Who's 'I'm A Boy', along with other era-defining monsters from The Troggs, Dave Dee, Dozy, Beaky, Mick & Tich and Manfred Mann, there are a few unreleased curios like 'I'm Following You' by The Syn, TV themes (*The Avengers* and *Man In A Suitcase*), muzak tunes, oddities and forgotten songs by forgotten bands that welcome new sets of ears, such as The Hi-Fis' 'London Look' and the excellent 'I'll Go Crazy' by The Untamed.

As compilations go, this is certainly a varied ensemble and many of these are not your usual '60s anthology choices – see Angela & The Fans with 'I Love Ya Illya', The London Studio Group's 'Pageing Sullivan' (guess which two guitarists are on there) and 'Town Talk' by Ken Woodman & His Piccadilly Brass. Many groups that frequented clubs like The Marquee and The Flamingo are represented, with cracking tracks from The Action, Bluesology, The Alan Bown Set, The Creation and Zoot Money's Big Roll Band, while cover girls like Peanut, Dana Gillespie, Twinkle and Mandy Rice-Davies also get their turns in the spotlight.

In deep-dive complications like this, there are always hidden gems waiting to be discovered, none more so than the Tom Jones-sounding Phillip Goodhand-Tait and his 'I'm Gonna Put Some Hurt On You', along with 'I'm Back' by The Good Things, an early incarnation of psych heroes Jason Crest. Harmony kings Tony Rivers & The Castaways, John Pantry's group Sounds Around and The Artwoods are also contained within, while The Spectrum's 'Portobello Road', is another obvious inclusion, from a group more known for their *Captain Scarlet* theme tune.

All this comes with a highly informative 48-page booklet, detailing every group and artist. A fantastic package that's huge fun and massively listenable.

Dom Picksley

Ed Black would later shed the last vestiges of garage-psych and form Goose Creek Symphony, and eventually landed in Linda Ronstadt's touring band in her pre-Andrew Gold days. The Superfine Dandelion LP sits neatly between the two genres without ever sounding like it's straining to find its niche. Unfortunately, it was one of a slew of one-off LPs on Mainstream Records, out of Chicago; a label famous for throwing stuff at the wall to see what might stick, and then walking away. Too bad, really – it's pretty good.

Mike Fornatale

THE TANGERINE ZOO
The Tangerine Zoo
★★★★

SUNDAZED LP

Tangerine Zoo were invited to appear at Woodstock but turned down the offer due to other commitments. If ever one decision determined the fate of a band surely this was it. Considered part of Boston's "Bosstown sound", Tangerine Zoo recorded two albums for Mainstream before disappearing from view in late 1969.

Their self-titled '68 debut kicks off with the Zoo's justly celebrated six-minute psyched-out make-over of Them's 'Gloria', which saw the original spectacularly remodelled in a sea of fuzz guitar and swirling Hammond. As openers go it's a hard act to follow, but rest assured the album comes well stocked with prime late '60s psychedelic fare in the form of 'Trip To The Zoo', 'Nature's Children', 'The Flight', 'Symphonic Psyche' and 'Crystalescent Heaven'. You can only wonder how Tangerine Zoo's fortunes might have played out had they opted to accept that invitation.

Grahame Bent

THE TORNADOS
Love And Fury
★★★★

CHERRY RED 5-CD BOX SET

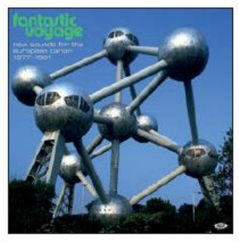
The skill and attention to detail that Cherry Red is putting into Joe Meek's tea chest tapes is astounding and extremely satisfying for fans of Meek's studio wizardry. That said, this handsome set of CDs is no *Best Of The Tornados* designed for easy listening but rather a forensic glimpse into the methods used by the producer to create the finished article.

It's fascinating to explore the DNA of the tracks as the tape speeds are altered and sound effects created. The evocative studio chatter, and Meek's out of tune vocal renditions of his vision, add to the atmosphere as the jigsaw of sound is built up and it's a joy to encounter the unmistakable 'Telstar' keyboard sound across the cuts. There are bunch of Billy Fury tracks, amongst the TV themes (and an early attempt at bluebeat), which are worth a listen, including a cool take of British beat standard 'Fortune Teller'.

Henry Hutton

VARIOUS ARTISTS
Fantastic Voyage: New Sounds For The European Canon 1977-1981
★★★★★

ACE CD/2-LP



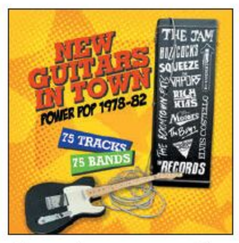
A companion piece to the marvelous *Café Exil, Fantastic Voyage* sees compilation mastermind Bob Stanley shift focus away from the European influences surrounding Bowie's earliest Berlin trilogy albums to the equally dark *Lodger* and *Scary Monsters*. This is a world that stretches beyond Europe into the US and Japan – music without borders.

Appropriately, it kicks off with Simple Minds' 'Theme For Great Cities' – a post-punk, new-wave electro epic. We then sweep from the industrial sound of Sheffield's Cabaret Voltaire via Ryuichi Sakamoto classic 'Riot In Lagos' to the punk experimentation of Grauzone and their German compatriots Harald Grosskopf and Can's Holger Czukay. Some of the older guard appear too – a newly-reinvented Peter Gabriel and The Walker Brothers' masterful 'Nite Flights' sit alongside British contemporaries The Associates and Scottish electro-wiz Thomas Leer, not to mention San Francisco HI-NRG maestro Patrick Cowley. Another gift from Bob and Ace – a fantastic voyage indeed.

Sarah Gregory

VARIOUS ARTISTS
New Guitars In Town: Power Pop 1978-1982
★★★★

CHERRY RED 3-CD BOX SET



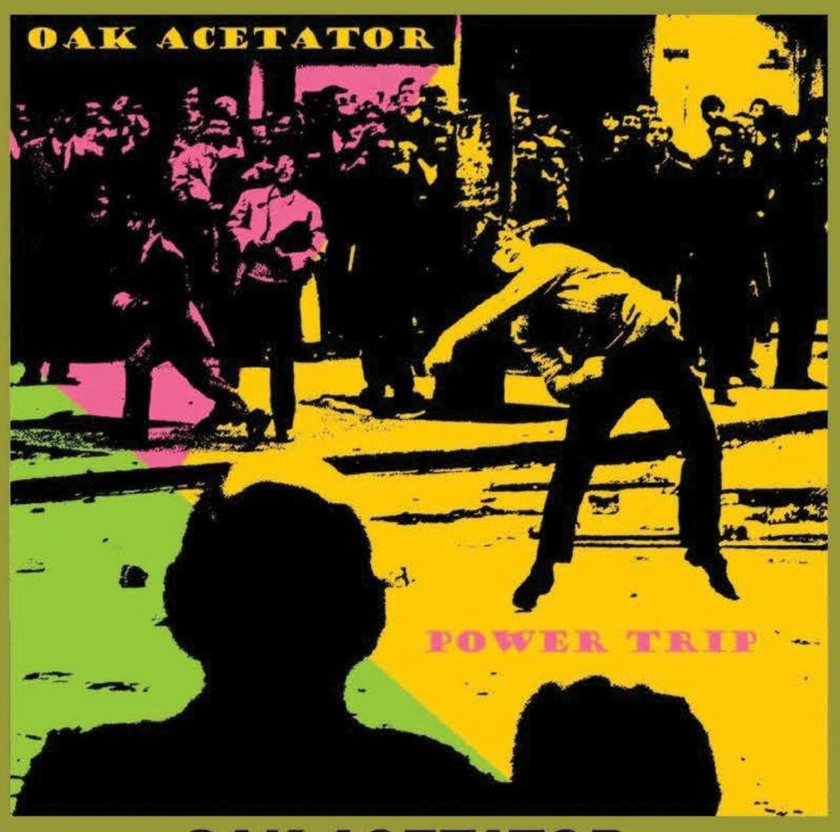
Latest entry in Cherry Red's Power Pop series features many artists from previous sets (*Harmony In My Head*, *Kids On The Street*) but the eclectic mix of popular (Elvis Costello, Squeeze, Buzzcocks, Boomtown Rats, Jam, Undertones) and obscure (Elevators, Nightshift, Carpettes) will satisfy powerpop and new-wave fanatics who may discover some pleasant surprises amidst the nostalgic tingles from long-time favourites (999, Boys, Wreckless Eric, Records, and the classic title track).

Typically thorough liner notes and contemporary quotes from the music weeklies bring the era alive. The generous mixture of punk, mod, bubblegum and Bay City Rollers knock-offs (The Rollers, anyone?) illustrate what talented kids could do in (mostly) under three minutes. The scene's high fun quotient offered something for every taste, all of which is represented on this package of pogo-tastic goodies. Break out the skinny ties and drainpipe trousers and dance the night away.

Jeff Penczak

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

TWO NEW RELEASES FROM BLUE MATTER RECORDS



BLUE MATTER

OAK ACETATOR: P0WER TRIP. LOBE 009

Folkestone's very own psychedelic punk overlords finally get an album out on vinyl. An essential blast of brilliant, stoned-out, wry, hippy rage over a wall of guitar & synth. Imagine Johnny Rotten fronting a space rock band but more wrecked, and crazier!

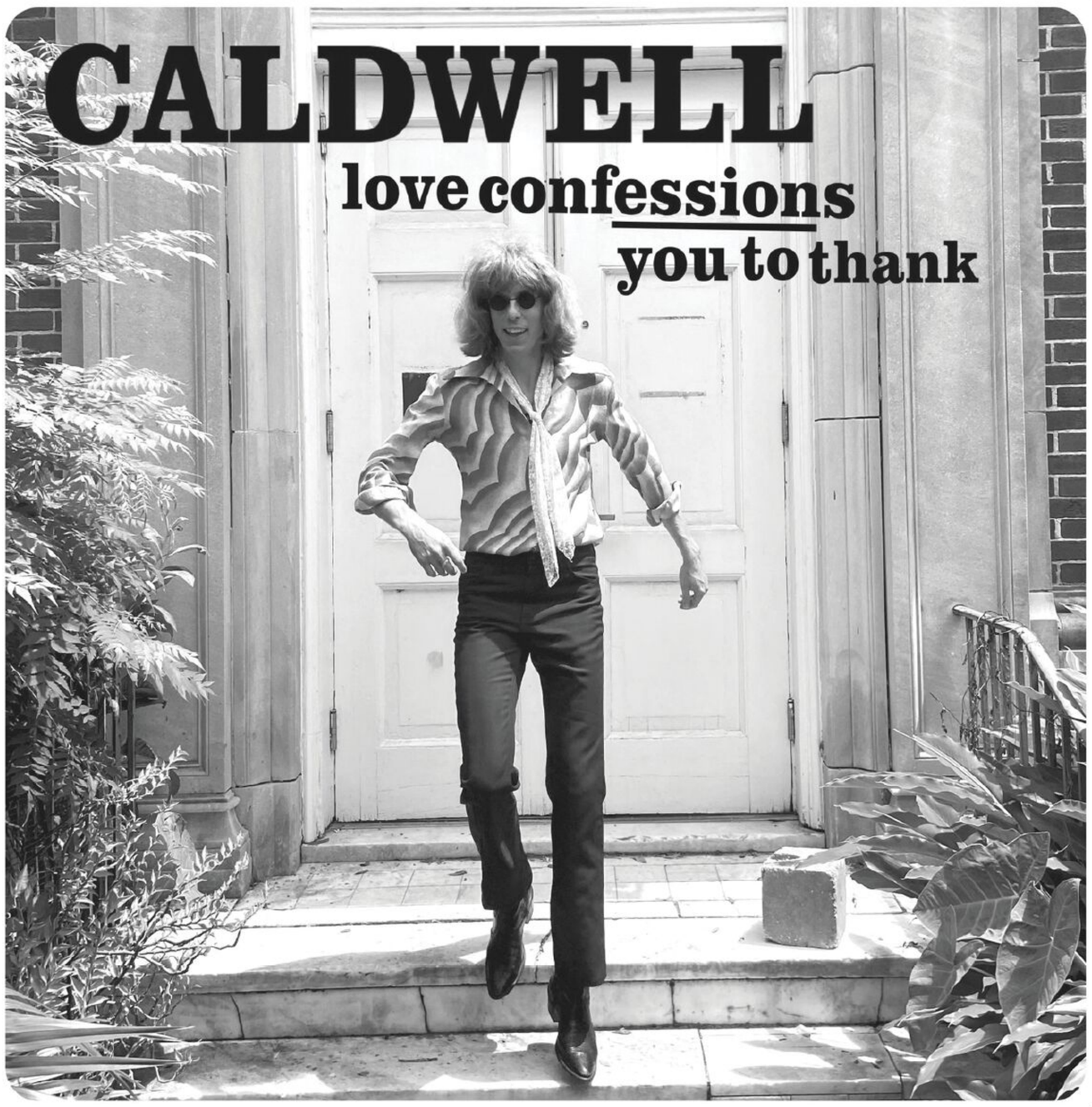
Released on LP & CD January 15

ADRIAN SHAW: A DARK REFLECTION. LOBE 10

A brand new studio album from legendary bassman Ade Shaw. Famed for his work with Hawkwind & The Bevis Frond, Adrian has filled this album with his own brand of head music, psych, rock, & even a touch of lilting balladry. It's a wonderful return. Don't miss it!

Released on LP & CD January 15

www.bluematterrecords.com



The debut 45
OUT NOW
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A multitude of new music

A Mirror On The World

THE BEVIS FROND
Focus On Nature
★★★★★

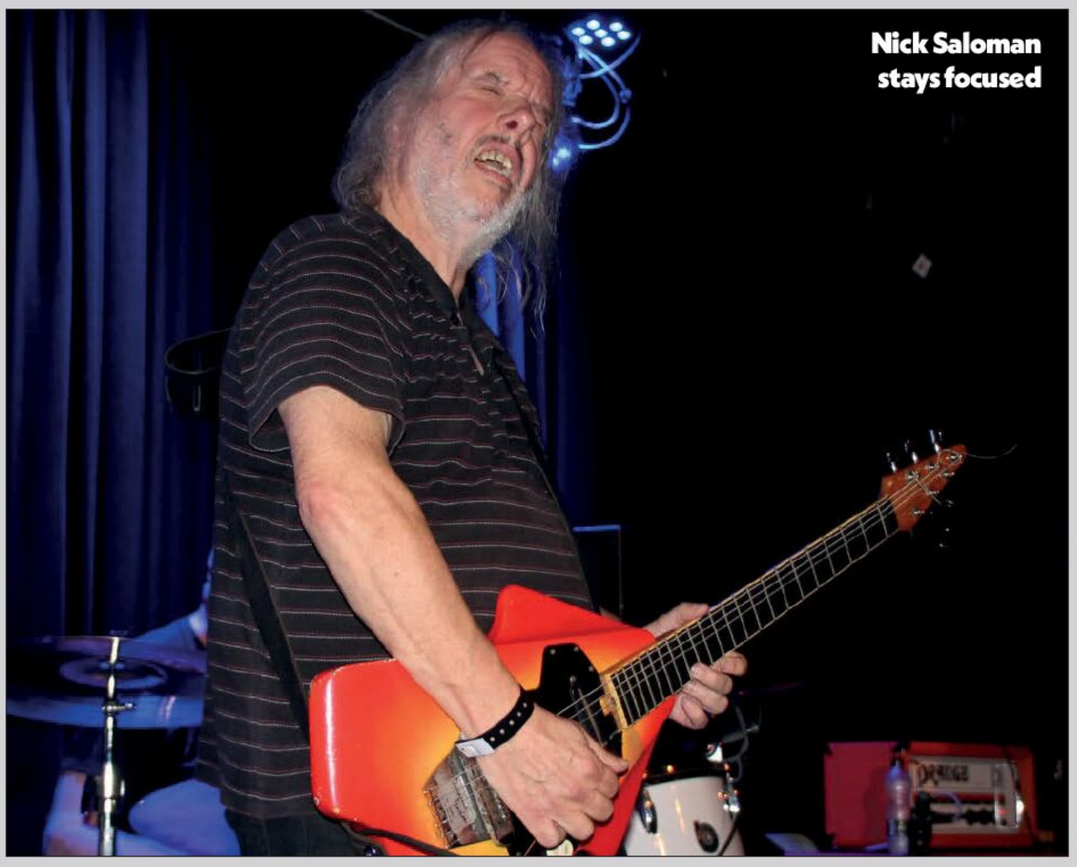
FIRE CD/2-LP

Should we rage against the dying of the light or attempt to hold a candle in the darkness? The Bevis Frond's Nick Saloman continues to do both, refusing to go quietly into older age while recording his vivid impressions of a fast-changing, not to say disintegrating society and planet. And of course, playing plenty of cathartic, blistering guitar that ultimately speaks louder and more eloquently than words could ever do.

Sonic Youth-style opener 'Heat' is a ripping protest rocker featuring three high-octane solos, as Saloman sings about environmental collapse, but it's followed by the gentler title track, presenting the world as it could be if we slowed down and respected our surroundings. The sneering attack on solipsism, 'God's Gift' which evokes '80s hardcore without sacrificing the Frond's trademark plaintive melodies, similarly contrasts with the tumbling, piano-led 'Vitruvian Man', emphasising our universal humanity.

Although many lyrics draw on personal experience and memories, it would be wrong to think of Saloman's songs as entirely autobiographical. Key track 'A Mirror' meditates on the creative life and his discomfort with the assumptions and expectations it can encourage. "I'm not an artist, I'm a mirror," he sings, before launching into an appropriately backwards guitar solo. From 'Here For The Other One', a marvellously grumpy number about making it clear you're only at the gig for the support band, not the shit headliners, to the eight-minute 'Mr Fred's Disco' (Neil Young's 'Cortez The Killer' setting sail for an early '70s provincial nightclub), these songs reflect their audience and the world they live in as much as Saloman's own life. Dystopian rocker 'Big Black Sky' could be apocalyptic metaphor, near-future realism or simply a portrait of ordinary life today in parts of our too-small world, while spiky closer 'Hung On A Wire' addresses a rock star who seemingly has it all but whose arrogance will be their downfall. At the same time, Saloman has no illusions that he's anything more than a pawn in the industry's game: all he can do is sing what he sees and play guitar like the world is ending. That's just his nature.

Ben Graham



Nick Saloman stays focused

THE BASEMENTS
Sounds Of Yesterday
★★★★

LOST IN TYME LP

Third long-player from Greece's The Basements and, as much as the previous two are worthwhile collections – 2012 debut *I'm Dead* and 2016's *Lost* – this latest may be their strongest, most appealing yet in terms of composition and execution. Perhaps it's down to musical maturity, but with this album we see the group at their most focused, each number more cohesive in sound and structure.

Beginning with 'Everything Is Wrong' and powering through the likes of 'Morning', 'Dreams', 'Rainy Days' and 'Children Of Tomorrow', the set delivers a series of kaleidoscopic, psych-edged teen and folk-punk memorandums, all of which hit all the right notes, shapes and gestures. Like Greece's great new young hopefuls The Sences, these will be lapped up by lovers of those backward-looking, forward-thinking sounds. Pealing 12-string guitar is a main feature throughout, as is the keening combo organ, fat fuzztone licks, driving drums and bass, plus vocals that are both sympathetic and empathetic to the whole garage sound.

Lenny Helsing

MUIREANN BRADLEY
I Kept These Old Blues
★★★★

TOMPKINS SQUARE CD/LP

Here's three things that don't happen every day. Number one: hearing a new guitarist whose playing stops you in your tracks. Number two: reviewing an album made by a 16-year-old. Number three: reviewing an album made by a 16-year-old whose heroes are the likes of Blind Blake and Reverend Gary Davis. Combine these three things and you'll get an idea of what discovering the music of Muireann Bradley feels like.

The title of the County Donegal musician's debut couldn't be more perfect: *I Kept These Old Blues*, it recites, before offering reworks of staples like 'Police Dog Blues', 'Candyman' and a 'Shake Sugaree' that would make Elizabeth Cotten smile. I'll admit to having my fair share of problems with most new trad blues releases. But there's an urgency, a sense of pristine, spontaneous candour (and enjoyment) in Bradley's playing and singing that makes this record an exceptionally refreshing listen.

Camilla Aisa

FABIANO DO NASCIMENTO AND SAM GENDEL
The Room
★★★★

REAL WORLD CD

Casting themselves as a latter-day reincarnation of sorts of the fabled history-making mid-60s partnership of Stan Getz and Joao Gilberto, *The Room* is the first collaboration between prolific LA-based Brazilian guitarist/composer Fabiano Do Nascimento and American experimental saxophonist and all round jazz outsider Sam Gendel.

Bonded by their mutual admiration for Brazilian greats Hermeto Pascoal, Baden Powell and the forementioned Getz-Gilberto duo, the album solely features the captivating subtleties of Do Nascimento's seven-string guitar and the flute-like tonalities of Gendel's soprano sax, as showcased on a repertoire of cool and meditative instrumentals. Recorded over two days in a basement studio in Pacific Palisades, the fluid interplay between the two musicians on a series of compositions inspired by Brazilian popular songs and folkloric themes is such that at times it almost reaches telepathic heights.

Grahame Bent

HANNAH FRANCES
Keeper Of The Shepherd
★★★★

RUINATION CD/LP

Exploring the fertile borderlands of folk and post-rock, Chicago musician Hannah Frances has three key tools at her disposal: her poetic, intimate yet allusive songwriting, her skilled but unique open-tuned guitar technique and, most of all, her endlessly expressive, expressionistic voice, recalling Billie Holiday and Liz Fraser, the free phrasing of Joni Mitchell and the elemental timbre of Kristin Hersh.

On 'Bronwyn', tumbling acoustic guitar dances with bebop rhythms before fuzz and feedback builds to a late-Sonic Youth-like conclusion. Pedal steel and lively brushed drums evoke widescreen horizons and restless movement on the title track, while 'Floodplain' features deconstructed ragtime guitar and fractured reflections on loss and heartbreak, stabbing strings darting throughout. The climax comes when 'Haunted Landscape, Echoing Cave' finally opens out into a languid saxophone solo, the claustrophobic arrangements dropping away to reveal an oasis of piercing light as Frances sings "I am released." You will be too.

Ben Graham

THE HANGING STARS
On A Golden Shore
★★★★

LOOSE MUSIC CD/LP

The fifth album from London's kings of cosmic-Americana kicks off with a confident swagger on the Stones-y 'Let Me Dream Of You' that, as ever, belies the tales of heartbreak and melancholy that permeate the record.

Musically, it covers a number of related stylistic bases, from the yearning, sun-dappled 'Sweet Light' to the classic Gram Parsons-Gene Clark country-rock of 'Disbelieving' and 'No Way Spell', both showcasing the exemplary pedal steel of Joe Harvey-Whyte. Slightly more surprising are the Latin rhythms on 'Happiness Is A Bird' and especially 'Silver Rings', while 'Golden Shore' finds Richard Olson crooning like '80s Bowie over a smooth, laidback groove featuring Will Summers (Circulus) on pan pipes.

Closing with the gospel-flavoured slow burn of 'Heart In A Box', *On A Golden Shore* doesn't stray too far from The Hanging Stars' comfort zones but proves why the band are increasingly recognised as masters in their field.

Ben Graham

HOWLIN' JAWS
Half Asleep Half Awake
★★★

BELLEVUE MUSIC RECORDINGS / MODULOR CD/LP

On their 2021 album *Strange Effect*, this French trio wore their Kinks influence not only in the grooves but also in the title. Their new LP, recorded once more at the legendary Toe Rag Studios in London with Liam Watson at the helm, is a darker, more densely psychedelic affair and is already making waves back home, with recent features in *Rock & Folk* and *Rolling Stone France*.

The creative shift seems to have been inspired by the band's experience of serving as the backing band for an award-winning theatre company and the improvisational nature necessitated by such work. Right from the very start of propulsive opener 'Mirror Mirror', we're in a wobbly world of vocals run through Leslie speakers, faux Eastern guitar licks, organ shimmer and twin harmony vocals. On top, with tracks like 'Through My Hands', there are still powerpop moves aplenty while the title track is cosmic-boogie heaven.

Hugh Dellar

LES BIG BYRD
Diamonds, Rhinestones And Hard Rain
★★★★

CHIMP LIMBS CD/LP

Swedish rockers Les Big Byrd have been kicking around the psych scene for over a decade now and, having taken four years to release 2022's *Eternal Light Brigade,* they decided to get on with it when it came to recording their latest *Diamonds, Rhinestones And Hard Rain.*

Opener 'Mareld' is a psych opus channelling Spiritualized, BJM and any other seminal neo-psych band you care to mention. Hypnotic and incessant – this definitive psych aesthetic pops up throughout, on instrumental 'Lycka Till På Färden' and the stomping title track. But what really brings this album alive are the twists and turns – the pseudo-ambient electronica of 'Ensam i stan på sommarlovet' or playful electro of 'Curved Light', but it's album closer 'The Night Bus' that's the real stand-out. A motorik beat accompanies synth and wah-wah, before entering cosmic jazz territory. Experimentation and flair that succeeds on all levels. A great piece of work.

Sarah Gregory

KULA SHAKER
Natural Magick
★★★★

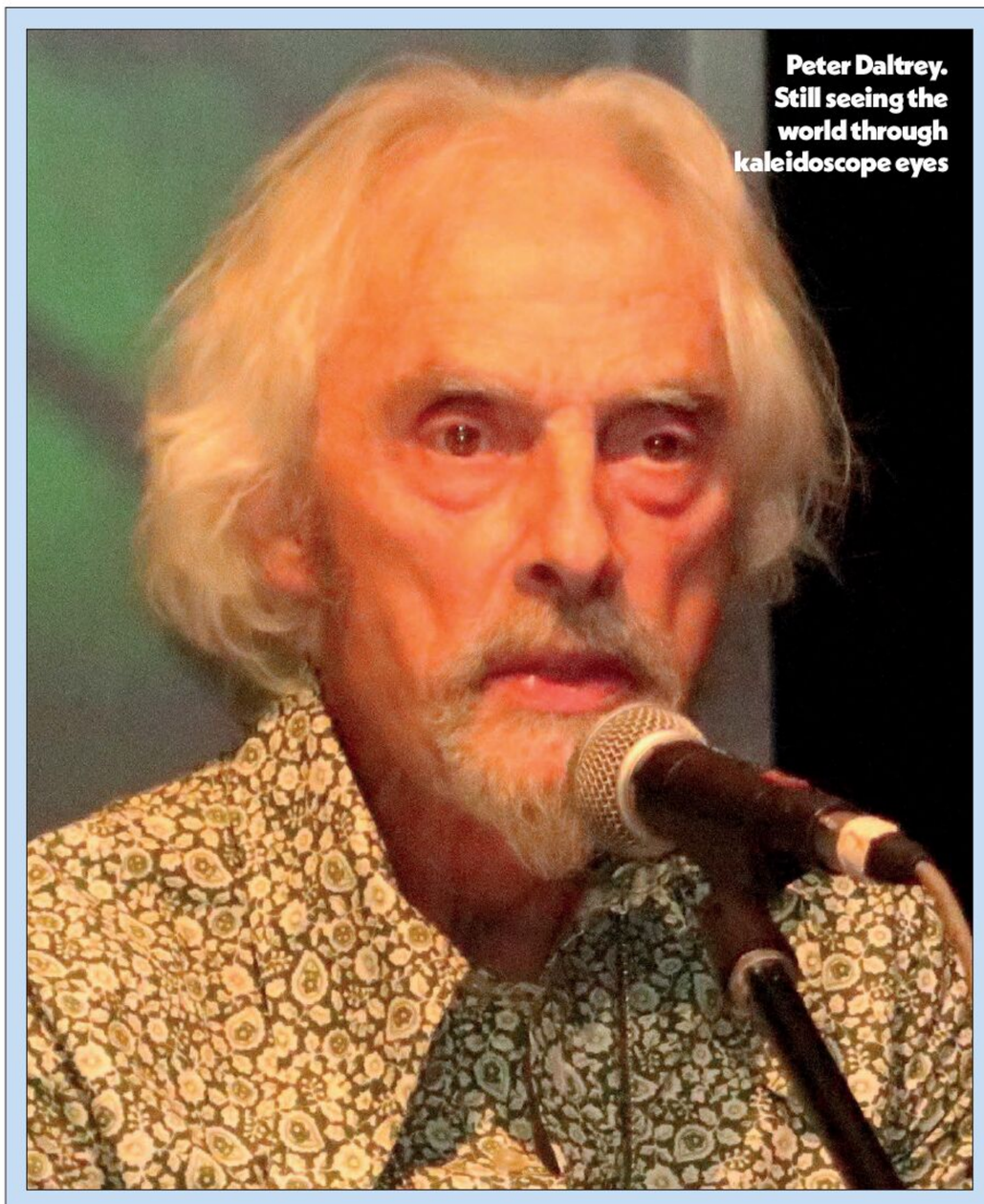
STRANGE FOLK CD/LP

Kula Shaker have weathered a lot during their 30-something year career – yes, it really has been that long. From the highs of their initial mainstream success, the #1 album *K* in 1996, for instance, to the temporary splits, ebbing sales and critical derision. One inverted snob critic (no doubt incensed by frontman Crispian Mill's "posh" luvvie background) famously called them "a joke band".

Well, the joke is now on the prick who wrote that because, against the expectations of many (including this critic), Kula Shaker – with its original line-up intact – have made the best album of their career. Their interest in traditional Indian culture, music and mysticism remains, and there's plenty of tamboura here, tabla there. But the tunes are insanely catchy. They've absolutely nailed the art of fusing white man's rock with Eastern exoticism. Hard to pin-point a stand-out track because it's all good, but an obvious starting point is first single 'Waves', which is already available on streaming platforms. Go, raga rock!

Chris Twomey

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio



Peter Daltrey. Still seeing the world through kaleidoscope eyes

Returning Legends

PETER DALTREY
The Leopard And The Lamb
★★★★

THINK LIKE A KEY CD/LP

"Here is the news," Peter Daltrey solemnly intones on the opening track of this outstanding album. "This is your final warning." From the fuel-burning space tourism of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos to the broader ecological catastrophe faced by our planet, the lyrics have something of the mordant wit of Leonard Cohen's 'The Future'.

The threat to the environment is a recurring theme of the record. So too is a sense of the passing of time, whether the childhood memories of 'Painting Portraits' or the lost romantic moments of 'The Spirits Of Hyde Park'. Sorrow and regret suffuse aching ballads 'The Song You Never Heard' and 'The Diary', but there are also poppier reminiscences of '60s London such as 'Black Cab' and 'Petticoat Lane'.

The album comes full circle with the title track, a brooding fable about the possible fate of mankind. Perceptive, poignant and playful, this is a superb fusion of psychedelia and progressive rock.

Clive Webb

DOROTHY MOSKOWITZ
Rising To Eternity
★★★★

TOMPKINS SQUARE CD/LP

Any self-respecting psychedelic or *avant*-rock fan inevitably holds The United States Of America's 1968 self-titled (and only) release dear to their heart. The band split the same year, and a stint with Country Joe notwithstanding, songwriter and lead vocalist Dorothy Moskowitz more or less fell off the grid. But then, seemingly out of the blue, she picked up the musical baton again leading to 2023's critically acclaimed *Under An Endless Sky* and now another offering *Rising To Eternity*.

Using the WEBB Telescope as her muse, Moskowitz has loosened her experimental leanings and adopted a less *avant-garde*, more electronic ambient tone for *Rising To Eternity*; this is a dream state where sonic exploration circles Moskowitz's voice – unique despite the obvious comparisons to Faithfull, Collins and Nico. Featuring her daughter on vocals, Moskowitz combines electronica, live piano and viola with archival NASA recordings. A wonderful piece of creative art; soothing and rich.

Sarah Gregory

OISIN LEECH
Cold Sea
★★★★

OUTSIDE MUSIC / TREMONE CD/LP

Oisin Leech first reached prominence amongst the new Liverpool beat pack circa 2006 with The 747s, but has since been delving into folkier roots as part of The Lost Brothers. He reaches a new pinnacle within that realm with this first solo outing, recorded in collaboration with the excellent US guitarist Steve Gunn. Together they relocated to County Donegal for the sessions for *Cold Sea* and have produced a sweetly short album of real serene beauty.

With accompaniment from, among others, Planxty's Donal Lunny and longstanding Bob Dylan bassist Tony Garnier, this is a lush, yet stripped-down affair that chimes well with the recent Irish folk renaissance. And while the songs themselves feel contemporary, they have a timeless feel, with 'Malin Gales' and opening track 'October Sun' excelling in a sturdy reflectiveness that rewards repeat listening.

Ben Phillipson

LEVITATION ROOM
Strange Weather
★★★★

THE REVERBERATION APPRECIATION SOCIETY / GREENWAY LP

By now a fixture in LA's psychedelic pop scene, Levitation Room are slowly stretching their musical boundaries. Eight years ago, debut *Ethos* fell on the garage-rock side of things, while 2019's *Headspace* went for jazzy Californian spaceyness.

Album number three finds the quartet trying yet another sonic approach, tapping into a mellow mood that flirts with yacht-rock and bedroom-pop ('Heaven') and adds smooth funky undertones to its vision of neo-psych ('Cool It Baby', 'Scene For An Exit'). *Strange Weather* is super-chill throughout, favouring blissed-out dreaminess – although 'Pintura' offers a cosmic instrumental intermission with fuzzy elements and 'Revelations' deploys guitars with a rougher edge. Numbers like centrepiece 'Immortal Love' are evidence that caressing narcotic contemplation and out-there guitar workouts can pair up seamlessly. Levitation Room's evolution is subtle but palpable; what remains unchanged is how perfectly pleasant, and soothing, the band's offerings are.

Camilla Aisa

MGMT ain't dead yet

THE LOVELY BASEMENT
Lazy Travellers
★★★★

NO ALOHA LP

The Bristol quartet's third album is another pleasant pop jangler with the occasional melancholic tears-in-your-beer dreamaway (the wonderfully titled 'Gas Station With A Bar'). 'Brown Street Library' breaks out the fuzz box for some Neil Young & Crazy Horse soloing and singer Katie Scaife wins our sympathy with her heavy-lidded confessional 'Wooden Leg'. We can almost smell the prairie dust floating over 'Two Kinds Of Stupid', which has a mellow Luna vibe.

Alt-Americana (Alt-Britannia?) never sounded sweeter than the toe tapping, hook-laden 'Ghosts Of The Listening Post' and the devil gets his due in 'Mysterious Ways', an expletive-filled rant that admits he, too, needs a union after his job was outsourced. Finally, 'Lee Raymond Knew' calls former Exxon CEO Lee Raymond to task for his failure to act on information about global warming way back in 1981. Politics, heartbreak, and some sudsy philosophy all wrapped up in a twangy little package of perfection.

Jeff Penczak

DENT MAY
What's For Breakfast?
★★★★

CAR PARK CD/LP

Dent May is a Mississippi-born, California-found pop auteur. His latest full-length outing bursts at the seams with the cleverest of clever pop, which fans of XTC, Brent Cash, Weezer *et al* will surely warm to.

Highlights include 'One Call, That's All', a strident indie-rocker which recalls early top-of-their-game Strokes. 'The Simple Life' elevates mundane diaristic events into pure, perfect pop, a technique similar to that used by Brian Wilson on The Beach Boys' *Friends*. There's another Beach Boys echo on 'Heaven On Wheels', an ode to Californian car-owning mobility. Throughout the record May makes use of his effortless falsetto, shifting into his higher register for those catchy choruses, of which there are many. He's a generous soul too, allowing his pals shared lead vocal on three of the tracks including 'Coasting On Fumes', on which Jordana sings a song of mental exhaustion and reserves, a contrasting counterpoint to the song's breezy pop feel.

Duncan Fletcher

MGMT
Loss Of Life
★★★★★

MOM + POP MUSIC CD/LP

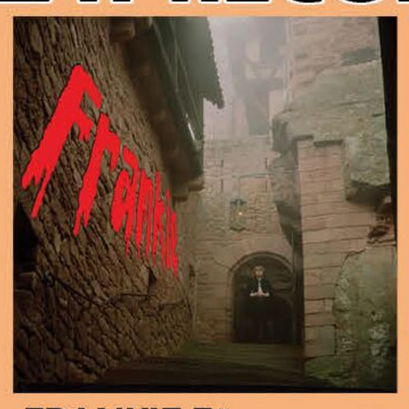
Here's a prediction: unless our critic colleagues lose their senses before the end of this year, MGMT's fifth album will feature on many a "best of 2024" list. If you've ever been fond of their peculiar brand of psychedelic pop, you'll know that after the high point *Oracular Spectacular* – which spored hits 'Time To Pretend' and 'Kids' – it subsequently became a tale of ever-diminishing returns.

Loss Of Life isn't just MGMT back in control (having finally left Columbia), it's them back in obscenely rude health. The early triumphs are nothing compared the head-swirling, melodically intoxicating title track, or the album's first single 'Mother Nature', a seductive Simon & Garfunkel-esque tune imbued with silky loveliness. The other single, 'Bubblegum Dog', is even better – four minutes of stomping baroque-pop, if you can imagine such a thing. Turn any corner and there's always a bit of psych-folk here, glammy electro there. There was a time, around 2008, when MGMT were regarded as a one-trick pony. Definitely not any more.

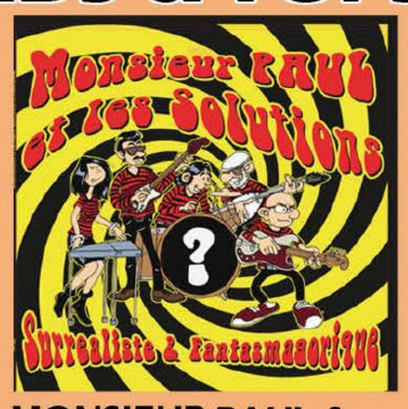
Chris Twomey

SOUNDFLAT RECORDS & TOPSY-TURVY RELEASES

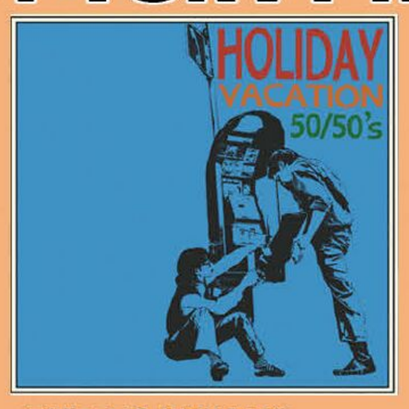
THE ROUTES LP
Reverberation Addict



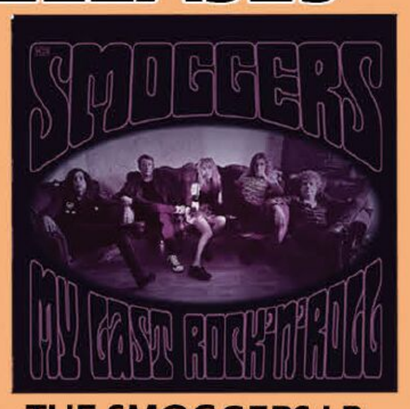
FRANKIE 7"
Panic Attack



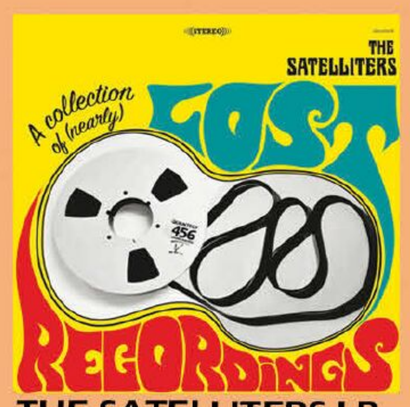
MONSIEUR PAUL & LES SOLUTIONS LP
Surrealiste & Fantasmagorique



THE 50/50'S 7"
Holiday

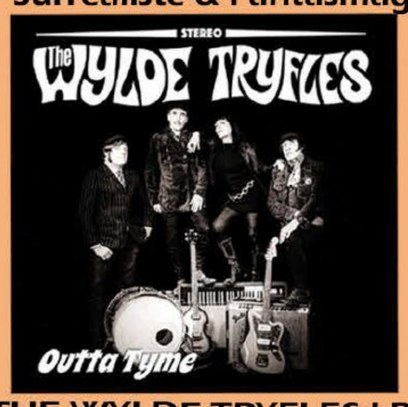


THE SMOGGERS LP
My Last Rock'n'Roll



THE SATELLITERS LP
A Collection of (nearly) Lost Recordings

MOOON LP
III



THE WYLDE TRYFLES LP
Outta Tyme

THE IMPERIAL SURFERS 10"
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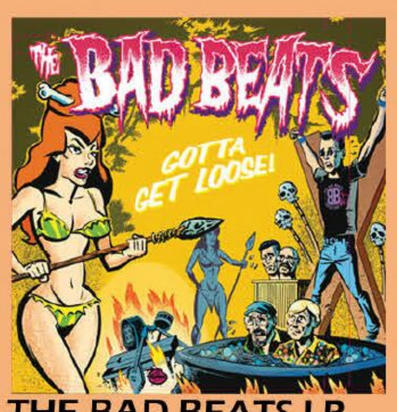
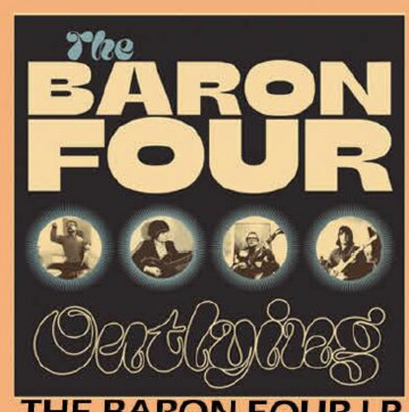


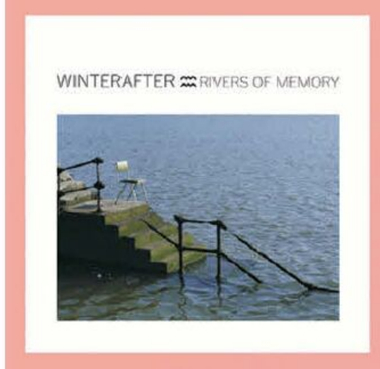
THE BAD BEATS LP
Gotta Get Loose!

THE FANTASTIC FELIINIS LP - Deux



THE BARON FOUR LP
Underlying

hanky panky records



WINTERAFTER
Rivers Of Memory
(LP & Digital -HPR-070)

Debut album by four-piece. Band leader Edu Orbezua fronted cult band The Shannons in the eraly 2000's.

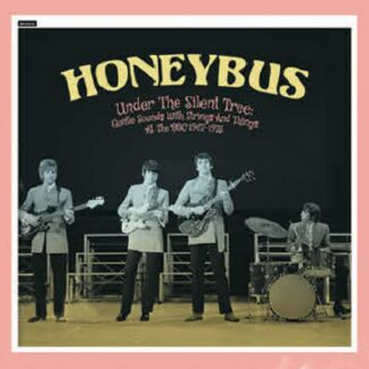
Think jangly folk-rock a la Jayhawks, Gene Clark, Beau Brummels, Whiskeytown, Sylvie or The Coral.

Vinyl only, limited to 250 copies.

PETE DELLO AND FRIENDS
Into Your Ears
(Special 2CD Edition)
(HPR-063CD)

#7 in Shindig! Writers' Poll 2023 Best Reissue Special double CD edition. The first disc features the original 1971 Nepentha mix available for the first time on CD, and the second disc contains Hanky Panky's 2005 edition that includes 10 bonus tracks (rare singles, demos & originally unreleased recordings).

Liner notes based on a new interview with Pete Dello by Thomas Walsh (Pugwash) & Andy Morten (Shindig!).



HONEYBUS
Under The Silent Tree:
Gentle Sounds
With Strings And Things
At The BBC 1967-1973
(2LP-2CD, HPR 066)

#2 in Shindig! Writers' Poll 2023 Best Compilation
For the first time, all the known surviving recordings collected on double LP (28 songs) and double CD (41 songs). All, except 7 tracks, previously unreleased. Includes 10 original songs (14 on the 2CD version) the band never properly recorded in the studio. Compiled by Andrew Sandoval. Notes by Andy Morten (Shindig! magazine)

DAVID BLUE
David Blue
(LP – HPR 067)

First ever vinyl reissue of classic 1966 folk-rock album.

Includes four-page color insert with notes by author and musician Mark Brend.

Limited edition of 500 copies. Joint release with Mapache Records.

DAVID BLUE
& THE AMERICAN PATROL
"The Lost 1967 Elektra Recordings & More"
(LP – HPR 068)

First ever release of these historical abandoned American Patrol recordings – along with the three solo tracks included on Elektra's 1965 LP Singer Songwriter Project.

Includes four-page color insert with notes by author and musician Mark Brend.

Limited edition of 500 copies. Joint release with Mapache Records.

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MOON GOOSE
Murmurations
★★★

FRUITS DE MER / INFLATABLE TARMAC LP

"Moon Goose put space, psych, prog and motorik in a bag, shook it, poked it, and burned it, then spread the ashes from the top of the Welsh Mountains with the wind in their faces until their eyes were crying black tears." If you're in any way intrigued or unsettled by that statement, wait till you hear this fourth album from the intense rockers.

Opening track '2023 AD' is a scabrous comment on the state of our world, a relentlessly surging wall of sound with lyrics that in tone and delivery evoke Sleaford Mods ("Internet banking / Online wanking").

Amidst the mainly instrumental album are two other vocal tracks. 'Rhesus David' comes on like a deranged film noir theme before morphing into something sinisterly carnivalesque. 'Cloud Of Eyeballs' is no less unsettling in its surreal intensity. Dark and intense, this album is a dark and potent brew best drunk slowly.

Clive Webb

OAK ACETATOR
Power Trip
★★★★★

BLUE MATTER CD/LP

Veteran of all things anarchedelic, Folkestone-based Robin Way has to date released six albums under the moniker Oak Acetator, and whilst OA might not be a household name, this wonderfully crafted seventh is set to change all of that.

Being darker and edgier than you might typically take your psych, the expert layering of vintage synths, spacey guitar and assorted emulators atop a soundscape of pop, garage-punk and space-rock makes a perfect backdrop for themes such as the cold inhumanity of animal experimentation ('Another Vivisection'), authoritarian control of our drinking water ('Dehydration') and the oft-fraught business of scoring recreational intoxicants ('Nice Dreams'). It's all thought-provoking fayre and Way's lyrics are insanely observant, quick and funny at all the right moments, and with a flourish of Eddie Hazel-inspired echoplex guitar notably in the album's title track, this is one stoned delight that should not leave your side.

Louis Wiggett

LAETITIA SADIER
Rooting For Love
★★★★

DUOPHONIC SUPER 45S CD/LP

Laetitia Sadier has been so busy (new tours with Stereolab and a fascinating 2023 album with Modern Cosmology are but two of her most recent endeavours) that it takes a while to realise this is her first solo album in eight years. And truth be told, almost three decades of fecund music making hardly result in a work that is as inspired as *Rooting For Love*.

It's a rare case of finding a master of a very specific – and very much imitated – sound in top form, unmistakably themselves yet still eager to venture further. Capable of density and lightness at the same time, *Rooting For Love* is both familiar and adventurous. It is resolutely open-minded, too: sonically, lyrically... up to the way Sadier interacts with guest voices. Literate and proudly pop, conscious, engaged, complex, imaginative: this is what *la resistance* looks like in 2024.

Camilla Aisa

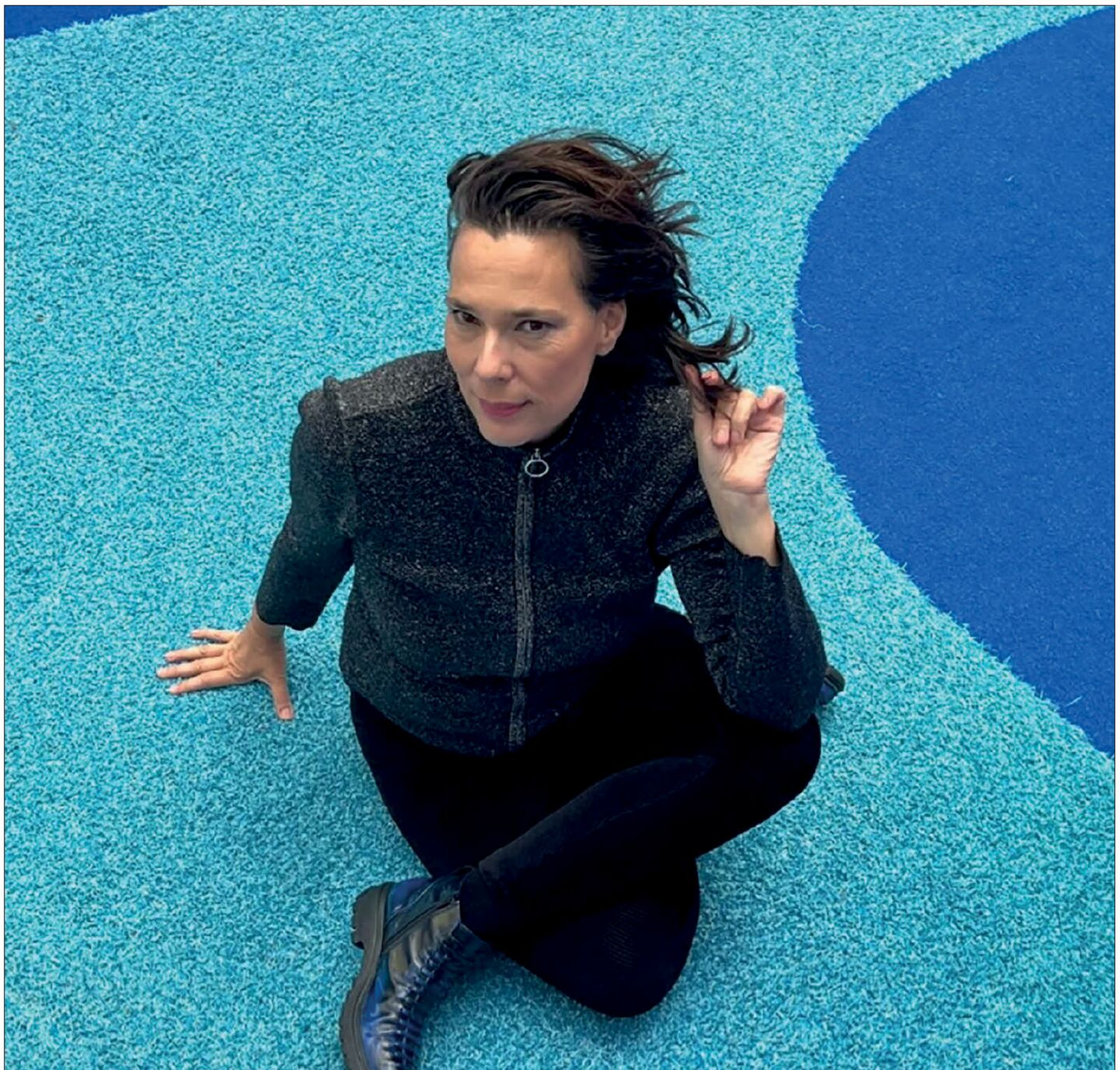
THE SATELLITERS
A Collection Of (Nearly) Lost Recordings
★★★★

SOUNDFLAT LP

Prolific neo-60s garage German band The Satelliters, "the high priests of fuzz", have been proudly making a noisy racket since 1993. Their previous long player *Zahstethomalex* was released back in 2017 and the recordings here date from around the same period.

Their most recent single 'Nothing Left To Tell' and B-side 'You' are included, alongside seven other '60s-inspired originals and three cover versions. Covers include 'Don't Say No', penned by Ruthann Friedman for The Oracle, 'Easy When I'm Dead' by The Charlatans and an obscure garage 45 by Velvet Haze. The album is a crashing, trashy affair that hangs together well for what is essentially a collection of odds and ends. Opener 'So Many Times' and the snotty 'What You Gonna See' prove a riveting opening salvo, packed with fuzz-guitar laden guitar riffs, cheesy organ and snotty vocals. Fans of vintage punk bands like The Seeds and Music Machine will approve.

Paul Ritchie



Laetitia Sadier gets to the root

SENDELICA
Man, Myth & Magic
★★★★

FRUITS DE MER CD/LP

Long-standing members of the Fruits de Mer family, Sendelica return with the third monumental instalment in their ambitious quartet of studio albums exploring mankind's relationship with religion, myth, magic, the planet and beyond.

Cosmic in theme and sound and dedicated to the memory of Hawkwind's Nik Turner, Sendelica weave a sprawling tapestry of sound across the four elongated tracks which together make up the double album's four sides and in the process turn up resonant echoes of fellow travellers Hawkwind, Can, Faust, Neu!, Popol Vuh, Floyd, Gong and Acid Mothers Temple. Everything here, from the concept, the themes, the atmospherics and the sheer scale of the undertaking, spells out magnum opus.

Besides being rooted in the familiar stylistic terrain of vintage '70s *kosmiche musik*, Sendelica enrich their deep space blends with shots of trance and ambient which further deepens the mysteriously weightless quality of their epic pilgrimages in sound.

Grahame Bent

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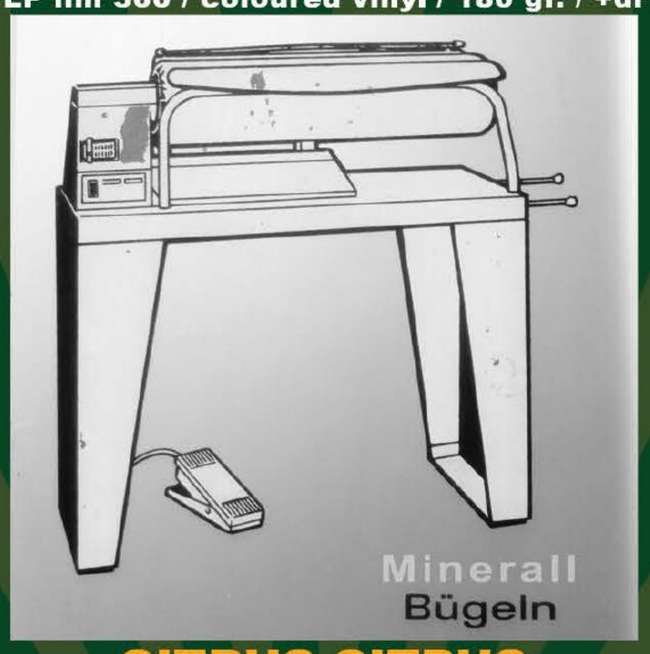

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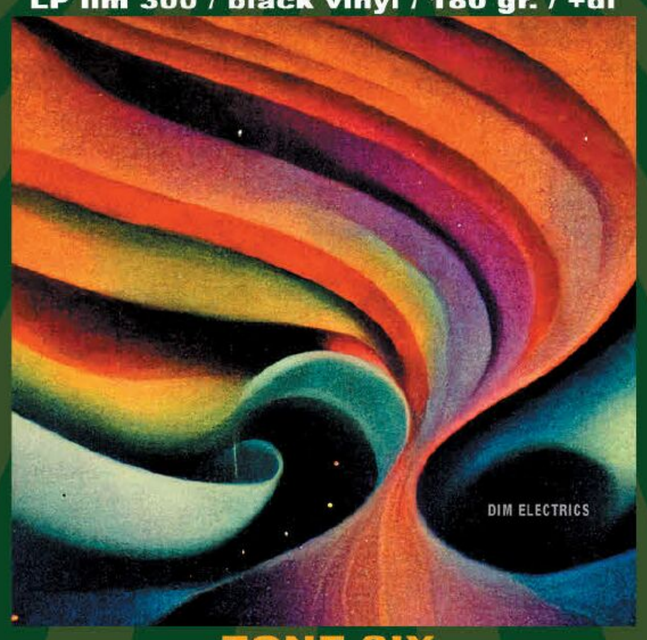

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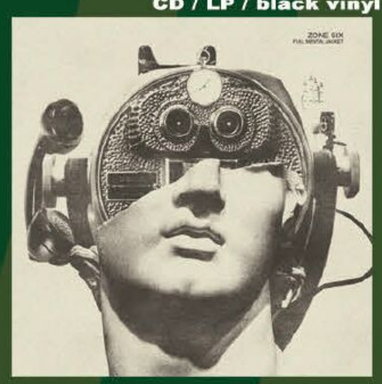

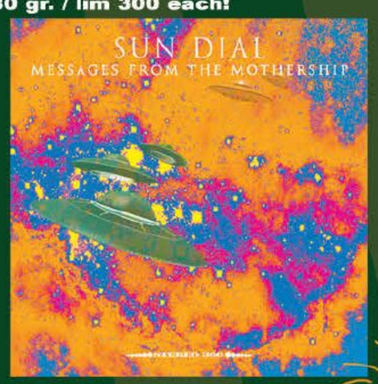

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BROKENSILENCE

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SKYWAY MAN
Flight Of The Long Distance Healer
★★★★

MAMA BIRD CD/LP

Artist and producer James Wallace took on his Skyway Man pseudonym after discovering a cache of letters written by the mysterious Dr James Cyr to a woman called Kate. The missives gave insight into Cyr's theories and channelling of alien lifeforms. It's this interest in UFOlogy that forms the basis of Wallace's work as Skyway Man.

The subject matter may be "out there" but musically Wallace uses traditional earthy musical forms – gospel, soul, funk, boogie, blues and pop all nestle up nicely together. 'Midnight Thunder' is feelgood funk, laced with soft brass, not dissimilar to The Band's purple patch material. 'Long Distance Healing' is an upbeat pop banger, while 'The Motherlight' ventures into 21st century folk. Also on board Wallace's sonic spaceship are pedal steel maestro Spencer Cullum, members of the Spacebomb house band, Erin Rae, and Vetiver's Andy Cabic. A sophisticated and rewarding listen whether you're into UFOs or not.

Duncan Fletcher

SMALLTOWN TIGERS
Crush On You
★★★

AREA PIRATA CD

Fresh from supporting The Damned on their European tour, Smalltown Tigers release an infectious ear-pummelling wall of overdriven garage sound. With the "less is more" attitude of The Ramones coupled with a dynamic beat that wouldn't have sounded out of place amongst early British punk bands such as Chelsea or Eater, the Tigers can grab a doo-wop chord progression and inject it with steroids, as on 'In A Dream (With A Fool Like You)', or emulate the choppy guitar sound of The Clash whilst creating the least fluffy teddy bear song in existence.

This is joyous stuff and the ladies sound like they're having a blast – no wonder fans of The Damned took to the group so strongly, as 'I Want You' could have been penned by Sensible and co way back in '77. The whole album is full of snotty attitude, with Ramones crib/tribute 'Joey' an absolute delight.

Henry Hutton

THE SMOGGERS
My Last Rock 'n' Roll
★★★

SOUNDFLAT LP

Spanish garage-rockers the Smoggers seem relentless in their mission to spread their evil-smelling, fuzz-ridden stench to the ends of the earth. This, their 10th album size collection, is one of their heaviest to date.

There are perhaps fewer "let's frug out" garage dancers on offer – although there are the likes of 'Looking For A Lie' and 'Time To Dream'. Instead, ponderous, heavy riffs, alongside ear-piercing organ and slimy, death-warmed-up rhythms are deployed to bludgeon the senses. Much of the music on offer this time around, in fact, sounds like a living, breathing version of the primordial ooze artwork depicted on the cover of the group's heroes The Fuzztones' 1985 debut *Lysergic Emanations*. The title track, 'You Got It', 'I Hate Your Smile' and strangely-titled closer 'Do You Smog On My Grave' perfectly capture The Smoggers' sick, psychedelically-inspired disposition. Need an unusual rock ballad to play for some unsuspecting friends? Look no further than the uneasy and sinister 'Travel With Mary'.

Lenny Helsing

THE SPECIAL PILLOW
Meets The Space Monster
★★★★

ZOFKO CD

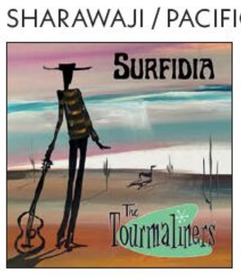
The Hoboken, NJ quartet have been dropping '60s-flavoured pop-psych gems for nearly three decades. Their latest six-tracker is a punny take-off on one of the worst movies ever made, *Frankenstein Meets The Space Monster* (UK title: *Duel Of The Space Monsters*).

Unbelievably, its 1965 soundtrack featured The Poets' masterpiece 'That's The Way It's Got To Be', and the Pillows give it a funky horn-driven workout with soaring violins (Katie Gentile) and Peter Stuart's strangulated string bending. 'Three On A Sundial' is a perky powerpop blast and 'A Certain Level Of Uncertainty' bears the quirky scent of The Claypool Lennon Delirium. Debby Schwartz sashays through 'Fond And Foggy', buoyed by Steven Levi and Cheryl Kingan's fluttering horn backing that treads lightly into Bonzos territory, and the monster is finally subdued on the sagebrush weeper 'Nowhere To Go But Home.'

Jeff Penczak

THE TOURMALINERS
Surfidia
★★★

SHARAWAJI / PACIFIC CD



There's an authentic feel to these surf compositions that could only be achieved by players who are steeped in the genre. The tight, frantic pace of opening track 'Grimace' sets the stall for what's to follow as the album unfolds with twanging lead stings, shimmering organ and pizzicato picking.

The swift guitar wrangling of 'Close Out' is followed by the steady rolling beat of 'Swanky' which then crests in 'Con Permiso' with its Latin-tinged strum. There are some stellar guests "on board", including Ron Blair of Tom Petty's Heartbreakers, Eddie Angel of Los Straitjackets and the wonderful Bob Spalding of original surf music pioneers The Ventures, who's guest shot on 'Giant Dipper' is a delight. Whether it's 'Tequila'-era beat or 'Walk Don't Run'-style descending chord sequences you're after, here's a textbook example of how to reference the past without plagiarising it.

Henry Hutton

Smalltown Tigers have their eye on you

VARIOUS ARTISTS
D-Day: A Grateful Dead Tribute From Krautland
★★★

LOLLIPOP SHOP CD

The Grateful Dead sailed close to space-rock during their *Anthem Of The Sun* and *Aoxomoxoa* period and krautrock legends Amon Düül II certainly saw themselves as the German Jefferson Airplane, so perhaps the DNA connecting the Dead and krautrock is not so fanciful.

Nineteen-eighties German neo-psych dependables Fit & Limo provide a superb sitar-drenched rendition of 'Dark Star' and their alter ego Temple Of LIB (The Shiny Gnomes) deliver an equally wonderful 'Mountains Of The Moon' with some great trippy fuzz guitar. A German language rendition of 'Friend Of The Devil' by Frank Liwa of The Flowerpornoes exudes a Lou Reed darkness, whilst fellow Flowerpornoe Markus M Steinbach gives us 'China Cat Sunflower' as envisioned by Kraftwerk. The Cosmic Kangaroos capture the West Coast guitar vibe in the form of early Dead obscurity 'Cardboard Cowboy' and there's plenty more to enjoy on this diverse and surprising collection. Overall, a hard day's fun.

Richard Allen

WINTERAFTER
Rivers Of Memory
★★★

HANKY PANKY LP

Bilbao-based guitarist and songwriter Eduardo Orbezua last saw musical action in the noughties as leader of The Shannons. His new band Winterafter picks up where they left off, crafting a pleasing blend of country, folk and jangly indie-rock. Joining Eduardo on the latest leg of his musical journey are JJ Espizua (guitar), Rudy Mental (bass), Santi Campos (keys) and Claudio Martin (drums).

Their debut album is a life-affirming affair with songs that address the passing of time, its resultant ageing and hard-earned wisdom. It recalls at times the spirituality of The Waterboys' Mike Scott, or Gene Clark mining peak introspection. Key tracks include jangly opener 'For Every Soul', 'Promise (Not To Fall)', with its Byrds-esque guitar work, and closing track 'Years Go By', a rumination on memory and the prospect of brighter futures. An album that takes gentle Americana as its source, then imbues it with Spanish warmth, reflection and uplifting positivity.

Duncan Fletcher

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SOFT HEARTED SCIENTISTS 'WALTZ OF THE WEEKEND TRIPLE LP

After far too long away, Nathan Hall and his fellow psychedelic experimenters are back with a stunning new album; it's surely their best yet, as one reviewer put it, *"The pop songs have got poppier, and the weird songs have got weirder*

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ACTION PAINTING / THE TOTAL REJECTION

Sun Anchor / The Sweetest Dreams

★★★★

RAVING POP BLAST!

Secreted inside the pages of this seventh issue of *Raving Pop Blast!* fanzine, there's an uncut green flexi-disc which pairs something good, fresh and angular pop-psych sounding with an all-out psycho-garage sludge attack.

First, it's former Sarah label combo Action Painting. Their 'Sun Anchor' drives along at medium pace and, amid pleasing rhythms and buoyant vocal melodies, some sparkling late '70s Wire-like elements can be detected. The Total Rejection offer up a demo version of 'The Sweetest Dreams', a track from their 2018 phantasmagorical debut album *Wrapping Yourself In Silver Foil Won't Save You From The Blast*. It's scuzzy, windy and wild; a fairground ride that whips you through clangourous muddy whirlpools. The atmosphere is one of disease, the sonics dominated by a series of cynical sounding, distantly sneering vocals, pounding drums and an onslaught of unrelenting fuzz and other jarring and echoing sound effects. Best advice: close your eyes and hold tight!

Lenny Helsing

THE BEGGERS

Metamorfose EP

★★★★

MUNSTER

Issued as the result of a collaboration between Discos Nada, Fatiado and Munster Records, this is the very first reissue of an almost impossible to find 1968 EP by this teenage Brazilian garage-punk combo from the industrial ABC Paulista region, which was later the cradle of the Brazilian punk-rock scene.

The brutal, fuzz-driven opening track 'Estes Homens Farrapos' translates as 'These Raging Men' and fell foul of the censorship that was rife during the era of military dictatorship, leading to a ban that essentially did for the group. Next up is the bizarrely punctuated instrumental 'We're Going, To Aid You', which was apparently knocked up in the studio to fill out the EP.

It's a wild freeform racket full of almost Lee Perry-esque oddball sonic adventure and trickery. 'Marily, Marily', which appeared on Groovie's great *Brazilian Nuggets* comp in 2011, is a wild scratchy beat cut with more great fuzz and a deranged primitive solo.

Hugh Dellar

ANJI CAKEBREAD

Dear Computer / Simple Song

★★★

THINK LIKE A KEY

The wonderfully named Anji Cakebread only ever cut these two sides before vanishing back into the mists of time, and this reissue of her not-especially rare but criminally overlooked and very out-of-time 45 from 1978 should perhaps find an audience with modern fans of leftfield electro-pop and female-fronted oddities.

Cakebread was inspired by a hefty electricity bill to pen a poem which then sparked a melody composed by producer Tony Rockliff. After a recording session and much technical treatment, this ended up becoming 'Dear Computer'. John Gilston of The Incredible String Band provided the computer voice (yes, you read that correctly!), it's a track that *Record Mirror* aptly described as "Kraftwerk meets Lynsey De Paul", though that fails to explain the sudden minimal harmonica flourishes on the fade-out. 'Simple Song' is more languid and liquid and with its loose white funk lead guitar lines, it's also a tad more conventional too.

Hugh Dellar

THEE GIRL FRIDAYS

Double Crossing Double Agent / Ejector Seat

★★★★

SPINOUT NUGGETS

Having survived an enforced break during the pandemic and a couple of line-up changes/additions, Scotland's finest garage-beat femme fatales follow up on their 2019 debut EP with this double-headed gem.

As with everything recorded by Angus McPake at his Ravencraig analogue studio, the sound is crunchy and ultra-vintage. With a riff that somehow pairs prime Eddie Cochran with The Calico Wall's 'Flight Reaction', 'Double Crossing Double Agent' is a hugely entertaining tale of a spy who pouts his deceptive talents to dubious uses and features great minimal keyboard lines from part-time organ grinder Caitriona Nettelle and a simple spiky guitar solo. Continuing the space age espionage angle, 'Ejector Seat' pays homage to a rather unsung vehicular prop as well as to Barry Gray and Sylvia & Gerry Anderson, and is awash with otherworldly sounds and lashings of reverb. The explosive tension builds and builds as we head into the final countdown.

Hugh Dellar

Postcards From A Flower

BLOSSOM TOES

Postcard / Everyone's Leaving Me Now

THE CRAZY WORLD OF ARTHUR BROWN

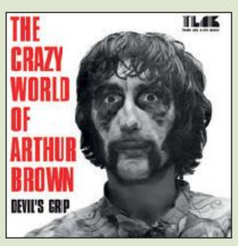
Devil's Grip / Give Him A Flower

THE MIRAGE

The Wedding Of Ramona Blair / Lazy Man

ALL ★★★★

ALL THINK LIKE A KEY



The days of wandering towards the "60s psych" section of your local record emporium and scooping up armfuls of desirable repro 45s (all illegitimate, of course) may be long behind us, but a number of imprints – Solution, Measured Mile, the odd major label RSD effort – are returning to the simple pleasures of the seven-inch, with varying levels of skill and success.

US outfit Think Like A Key is establishing a rich catalogue of psych-songwriter leaning titles old and new, from Patto and Second Hand to Anton Barbeau and Ex Norwegian. Their latest venture is a series of 45 reissues housed in freshly designed, period-friendly picture sleeves designed by Piper Gates.

Blossom Toes' "between the albums" stab at a commercial pop 45, 'Postcard' comes on like The Kinks and The Alan Price Set on a package holiday together. Flip it over and you'll find the lissom, jazzy 'Everyone's Leaving Me Now'. 'Devil's Grip' comes from a different jazz place, one where Arthur Brown hasn't quite shaken off the ghosts of Howlin' Wolf and Screamin' Jay Hawkins and the #1 success of 'Fire' is still a demonic dream away. The hokey 'Give Him A Flower' wouldn't have sounded out of place on the first Bonzos album. Both sides of The Mirage single are among this writer's favourites of the UK flower-pop canon: wistful, textured Beatle-isms that ooze the spirit of '67 like few others.

Audio fidelity is fair – we're hardly doing like for like comparisons with our originals after all. And that's kind of the point – we can no longer find or afford the originals. More titles from TLIK are imminent – start collecting.

Andy Morten

Blossom Toes let their friends know that they're alright

THE HORNETS

It's So Easy / Farmer Brown

★★★★

SELF-RELEASED

They've been touted as "The best new, young band to come out of West London since The Who" and have made a splash around the same hallowed '60s stomping ground of Ealing, Windsor and Brentford.

Yet the four-piece's latest single, and a scrumptious taster for their forthcoming debut long-player, eschews much of the R&B ramalama that's informed their previous releases in favour of a wiry new-wave patina of scratchy guitars and bee-sting drums. 'It's So Easy' sounds like 'Another Girl, Another Planet' in the hands of a speed-addled 1979 mod revival band with a penchant for tragic romance. "A recurring dream of paradise with a girl I'd never meet," sings Bailey Penny. 'Farmer Brown', meanwhile, is a tale of murder and intrigue powered by spiky lead guitar and an impassioned vocal that recalls The Coral's James Skelly. Reassuringly unaffected and pure. Let's hope they don't lose it.

Andy Morten

HUTCH

Smile And Wave EP

★★★★

SELF-RELEASED

Brighton band Hutch have attracted many devotees in recent months with their buoyant live shows. Their whimsical and

mischievous character is captured by a description of themselves as "Twang-Pop Yacht-Rock Soft Psychers". *Smile And Wave* delivers on its promise to "focus on the good things and small moments of peace in a big hectic world".

The sparkling guitars of opener 'The Bow' are bathed in a sunshine glow, the rhythm wonderfully woozy and words full of trippy wonder. Much of that is also true of the shimmering 'Ice On The Lake' and gently meandering 'Marmalade Air'. Most hypnotic of all is 'See It All', its spacious arrangement structured around a harp arpeggio and the aphoristic lyric encouraging the listener to wish for a better future rather than regret the past. These languid and gently lysergic songs are a welcome antidote to the dark winter months.

Clive Webb

LUCY KITCHEN
The Stabal Sessions EP
★★★★

BOHEMIA ROSE

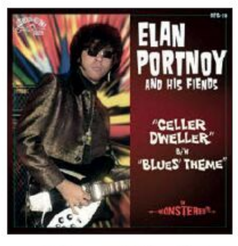
Lucy Kitchen is a fine example of an artist who's continued to develop and grow artistically, her two LPs to date (2014's *Waking* and 2017's *Sun To My Moon*) perfectly showcasing her atmospheric but melodic folk sound and deft songwriting skills. This new EP, recorded live in 2023 is her most personal recording to date and includes three new compositions written and recorded following the passing of her late husband, all of which adds a deep, emotional heart to the EP's four tracks.

Opener 'Blue Light' highlights perfectly what Kitchen does best, her gentle emotive vocals set against a dreamy slice of Americana. 'Chemo Song/Sleeping Song' is a touching document of emotional turmoil, a prayer of hope woven into a wonderfully crafted slice of melancholy folk and 'The Boatman' a poetic rumination on grief that closes this beautifully crafted collection.

Paul Osborne

ELAN PORTNOY & HIS FIENDS
Celler Dweller / Blues Theme
★★★

MOFO-BONES REKKIDZ



With a pedigree that stretches right back to New York City cave-teens The Outta Place, The Bohemian Bedrocks, The Twisted and the mighty Optic Nerve, it's fair to say that Elan Portnoy has earned his stripes.

On the whacked-out topside of this new 45, you get the kind of dark garage-psych that you might expect – a three-chord riff that's almost submerged by endless disturbing noises that swell in and out of the mix like things trying to emerge from the depths. Imagine Hawkwind if they'd been injected with the spirit of 1976 and then left to steep in prime *Boulders*. Flip it over and you get a fairly straight take on the much-covered Davie Allan & The Arrows biker-flick instro that adds little to the original beyond an endless shred of splintered lead guitar, but doesn't take much away either.

Hugh Dellar

SATAN'S SATYRS
Quick Quiet Raid / Video City
★★★

TEE PEE

For the decade up to 2019, Satan's Satyrs' music celebrated occultism at its pulpiest, and songs such as 'Electric Witchwhipper', 'Alucard' and 'Baphomet's Boogie' could have retroactively served as the soundtrack to the '70s' most lurid horror paperback covers. The American equivalent of England's Electric Wizard, in other words.

Now they are back with their first 45 in four years, and although there are suggestions of Blue Cheer and Sabbath, 'Quick Quiet Riot' most channels the spirit of Alice Cooper when Vince was blond, the band were signed to Zappa's Straight Records, and a whiff of psychedelia permeated their grooves. The Coop's also there on flipside 'Video City', a weird amalgam of the glam riffery of the Ezrin years and the turn of the millennium doominess of *Dragontown*. It's a strong return, but hard to tell if Satan's Satyrs are maturing or are just not quite as bonkers as they used to be.

Peter Gallagher

THE TRAITS
High On A Cloud / Just Like Me
★★★★

MOFO-BONE REKKIDZ

The Traits were a garage band from Pelham, New York, formed in early 1967 and mostly remembered for their role as the studio recording band for the novelty song 'Nobody Loves The Hulk', which was released two years later and remains a peculiar artifact popular among Marvel Comics afficionados.

'High On A Cloud', the topside here, only appeared on the '67 compilation *Ren Vell Records Presents: Battle Of The Bands, Volume 1* (no *Volume 2* was ever forthcoming, by the way) and is prime primal snot. Built around a simple pounding riff that's stomped damn hard into the dirt over three and a half minutes and offering a primitive organ line and scrappy fuzz solo that seems to sink into the bedrock, it's got a textbook snarling vocal and instantly memorable shout-along chorus. 'Just Like Me' is a respectable cover of the Paul Revere & The Raiders hit rescued from the tapes of a New York TV show.

Hugh Dellar

LISTEN TO SHINDIG! ON SOHO RADIO
Soho Radio

tracks

CAMILLA AISA rounds up this month's digital downloads and stray oddities

The Tyde's Darren Rademaker
PHOTO: ALEXANDRA CABRAL

It was 2020 when *Shindig!* caught up with Darren Rademaker – aka **THE TYDE** – who was busy in the studio working on album number five. It's almost here now, and the things he mused about – choosing keyboards and '80s aesthetics over surfboards – all shine through the yacht-rock caress of 'Heal Thyself'. A soothing, most welcome return.

Speaking of returns, *avant*-pop journeymen **THE HIGH LLAMAS** have recently announced their first new album in eight years. Lead single 'Hey Panda' reveals not only an unexpected source of inspiration – Sean O'Hagan's love for the TikTok account of a giant carrots-loving Panda bear – but a sound that's resolutely tuned into the world in 2024.

By contrast, the music that sisters Daniella (Topaz) and Natasha Livingstone make as **FIRE IN HER EYES** is instinctively tied to a '60s/70s tradition of ethereal progressive folk. Brimming with proper *carpe diem* spirit, 'Sooner Or Later' is a strong showcase for the duo's ghostly Albion-worthy vocal harmonies.

ROGÉR FAKHR's *Fine Anyway* has been on heavy rotation here since its 2021 release. New album *East Of Any Place* now collects additional studio tracks from the Lebanese singer-songwriter. With its spacey Shawn Phillips vibe, 'Rainhill' is an immediate highlight. It is also available as part of House Of Afandi's compilation *By The People For The People*, the entire profits of which are being donated to The Palestine Children's Relief Fund.

It's February, so many of us are probably busy daydreaming about warm weather and scare-the-grey-away sunbeams. In comes **LADY WRAY** with the perfect soundtrack for such proclivities – one of her 2022 tracks, the tellingly titled 'Under The Sun', now gets a groovy, vibey remix courtesy of *Shindig!* faves Surprise Chef.

Fancy a dose of nostalgic soul sweetness? Led by Monophonics collaborator Holley Gray, London-based outfit **WONDER 45** wear their retrodelic heart on their sleeve on the passionate 'Cry', which features driving horns and soaring vocals from Jessica Greenfield. Listeners will find it hard not to fervidly lip sync.

"I Love You" becomes a hypnotic, haunting spell on **VERA SOLA**'s new song 'I'm Lying'. Impending tragedy seems to loom over the lyrics ("Is all the thunder worth the sky?" she inquires) as well as the music, raised as it is on dust-covered country. The Western noir elegance it conjures is alluring indeed.

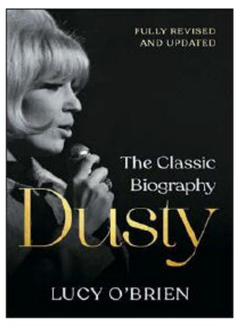
Keeping on with the spellbinding sonics, we find **SHEHERAZAAD**, an American artist whose music questions Western and South Asian traditions. Songs like the captivating 'Mashoor', produced by like-minded great Arooj Aftab, possess an innate, engaging fluidity – they belong to what Sheherazaad herself calls a new wave of diasporic music innovation with links with political liberation. Stimulating and enchanting in equal measure.

There's a gentle, instinctive airiness at the heart of **ITASCA**'s music – Kayla Cohen's vocals are enveloping, the overall feeling is that of exquisite lightness, so much so that even when the LA-based singer-songwriter's guitar flirts with the complex, it couldn't be more far from show-show-offy knottiness. 'Imitation Of War' is a slice of elegant folk evolved into electric dreaminess (with subtly Jerry Garcia-esque noodling to boot).

Dusty, the difficult, awkward icon

DUSTY
Lucy O'Brien
★★★★★

MICHAEL O'MARA BOOKS



At the age of 10, Mary O'Brien told her teacher she wanted to be "a blues singer", and this is the story of how a single-minded North London catholic school girl took off her pebble glasses, bouffanted her rust-coloured hair into a teetering blonde beehive, applied a thick streak of black eyeliner to each lid, became Dusty Springfield, and did just that.

This inimitably melodramatic moment is the launching point for author Lucy O'Brien's third iteration of her classic Dusty biography, first published in 1988, and extensively reworked to mark 25 years since the singer's death.

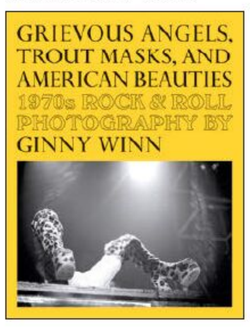
Dusty was the owner of one of the most expressive, masterful instruments in pop history – a voice that could swell from devastation to heart-bursting optimism in a few syllables – and her mountain-and-valley life story mirrors it note-for-note. Lucy traces her story through interviews with friends and associates including Dusty's PA and best friend Pat Rhodes, Tom Jones, Lulu, the deliciously loose-tongued PP Arnold, Jerry Wexler and Arif Mardin, as well as providing meticulously researched background detail.

Springfield was an awkward pop and TV star; wracked with self-doubt, her lesbian relationships kept secret, and regarded by many as "difficult". She describes herself as "a fairly calculating bastard" and her journey from folksy world-pop singer to diamond-cut soul icon shows that steel. Sadly, steel rusts, and for Dusty the '70s were a blizzard of cocaine, alcohol and deteriorating mental health. Lucy treats these difficult years with sensitivity but doesn't shy away from the tragedy; the disastrous Peter Stringfellow-backed '85 return being a wince-inducing low. Thankfully, Dusty's life soars to a redemptive coda with pop rehabilitation and quiet triumph.

Kate Hodges

GRIEVOUS ANGELS, TROUT MASKS, AND AMERICAN BEAUTIES: 1970S ROCK & ROLL PHOTOGRAPHY BY GINNY WINN
Edited and annotated by Pat Thomas & Jessica Hundley
★★★

FANTAGRAPHICS



Ginny Winn was house photographer at Warners/Reprise in the early '70s and joined Hollywood photographer Norman Steef's studio in the latter half of the decade. This book presents a collection of her work from those times, with most seeing publication for the first time.

The cover shot of the Cooper crotch as Alice sprawls on stage is misleading as it suggests debauchery ahoy, but this is the exception rather than the rule. Winn's forte was intimate portraits that focused on the eyes, because "that way, you're really looking in, soul to soul". Maria Muldaur, who provides an essay and some interviews, is Winn's primary subject, with Jerry Garcia, Captain Beefheart and Gram Parsons frequent visitors. "Freebo from Bonnie Raitt's band" is here too, his tan, 'tache and tee combining perfectly to capture time and place. The Steef years make a misnomer of the book's title, with the distinctly un-rock 'n' roll Gloria Swanson, Francis Ford Coppola, a young Jodie Foster, and Pinky Tuscadero from *Happy Days* all present and correct. Trousers remain dangerously flared throughout.

There's no faulting the photos – Winn clearly had a knack for putting her subjects at ease – but this volume is slim and its annotations irritatingly inconsistent. For example, Lesley Gore gets eight words telling us she sang 'It's My Party', the one thing everyone knows about Lesley Gore. On the very same page, Van Morrison gets 111 words, a gushfest about how much the editors love Van that tells us nothing about The Man or the photo.

Peter Gallagher

IN THE JINGLE JANGLE JUNGLE: KEEPING TIME WITH THE BRIAN JONESTOWN MASSACRE
Joel Gion
★★★★

WHITE RABBIT

As the longest serving member of post-psych noiseniks The Brian Jonestown Massacre besides main man Anton Newcombe, tambourine player Joel Gion is well placed to tell their tale, his side-of-stage vantage point giving him the ideal right-there but slightly detached perspective on the turbulent and unpredictable group. *In The Jingle Jangle Jungle* is in many ways a companion to, and behind-the-scenes commentary on, the 2004 documentary *Dig!* mostly covering the same eight-year period as the film and many of its most memorable moments, such as the BJM's onstage bust-up at LA's Viper Room.

But this is Gion's story rather than that of the band, and while he spares us his childhood by starting the tale proper when he turns 18, it's fascinating to get his American fan's perspective on shoegaze and Britpop as being the cool alternative music for a small coterie of anglophile heads in San Francisco, when grunge had become the new mainstream. Gion's love of '60s music and films, especially from the UK, will also chime with *Shindig!* readers.

Gion's reportage is candid, insightful, and by turns both hilarious and regretful. Drugs, drink and debauchery abound, but Gion readily admits his own fuckups and thoughtless behaviour while refusing to wallow in self-pity or recrimination. In this way, the book recalls nothing less than Julian Cope's *Head-On,* for many of us the gold standard in rock memoirs. Engaging, unique and endlessly quotable, *In The Jingle Jangle Jungle* is a must-read for fans of turn-of-the-millennium psychedelic rock 'n' roll.

Ben Graham

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wintergarden

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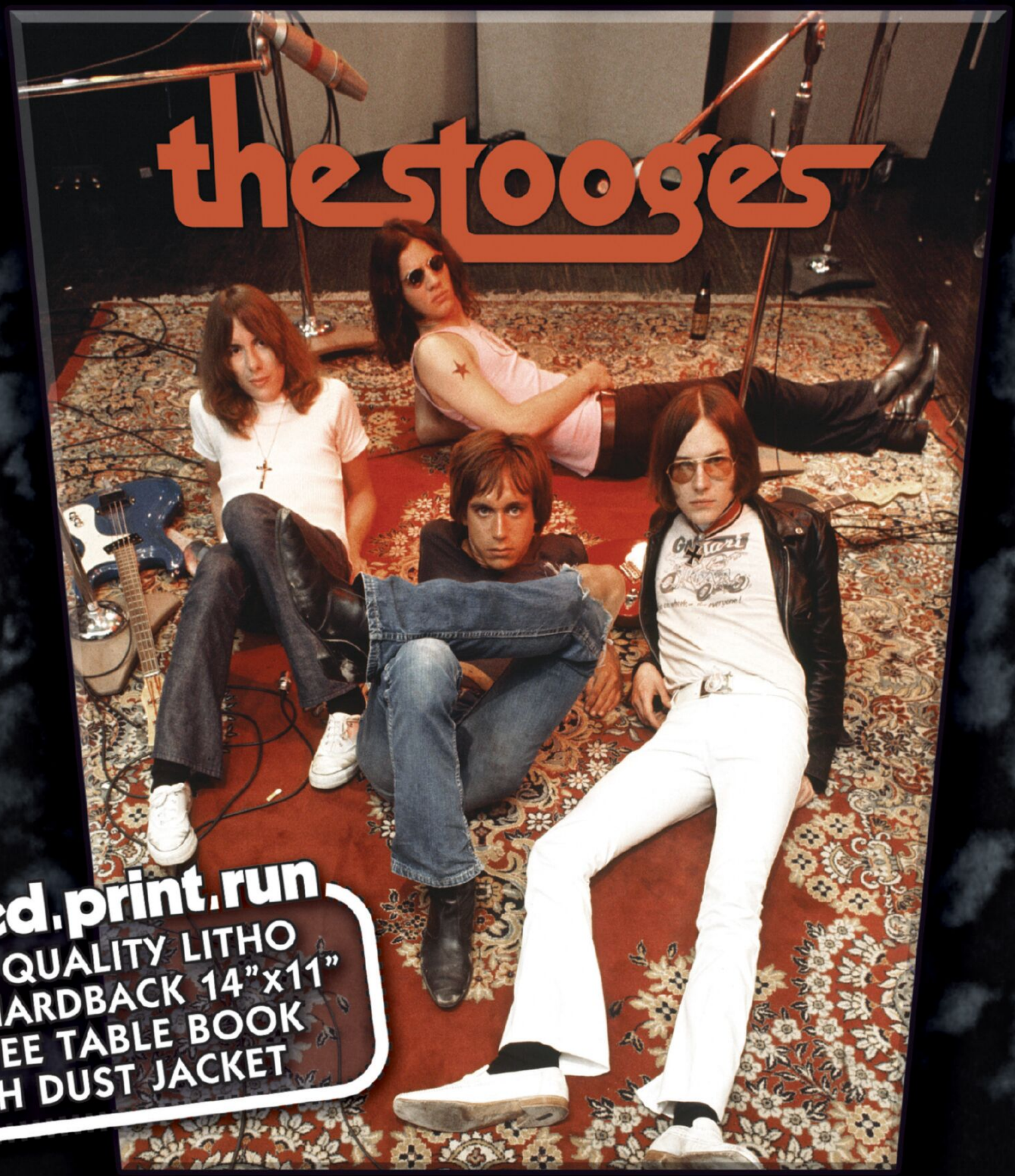

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Per Nilsen and Carlton P. Sandercock

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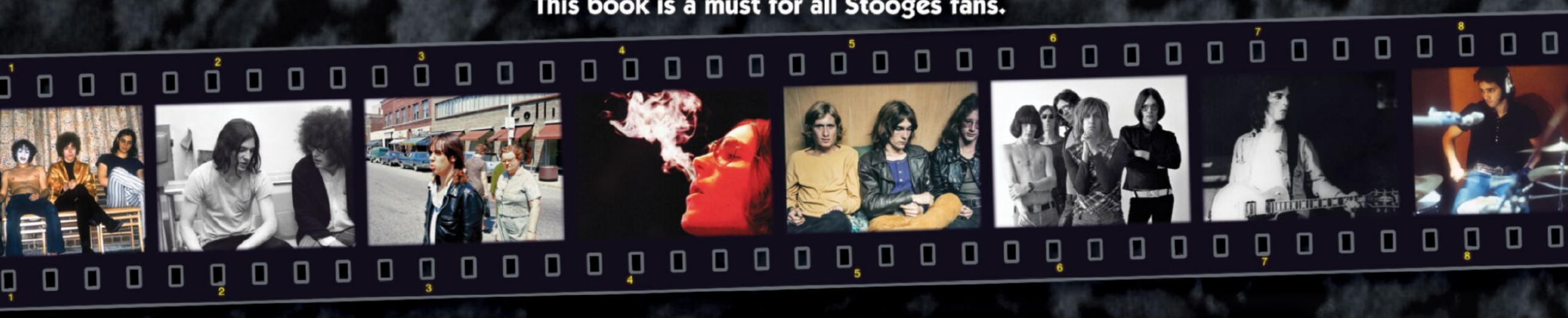

Check out our website for more details on this book and all Stooges and related vinyl, CDs and boxsets.

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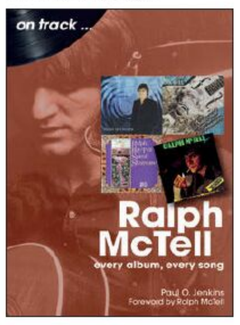
ON TRACK... RALPH MCTELL

Paul O Jenkins

★★★★

SONIC BOND



Of all the '60s Brit folk boomers, McTell is the most likely to suffer accusations of being too safe. Less mercurial on the fretboard than Jansch or Graham, more stylistically predictable than Martyn. Then there's 'Streets Of London', a much-loved song but one that's become something of a millstone, casting a shadow over the rest of his output. Dig deeper though and you find a consistently articulate and compassionate artist, one who's always managed to push on with his craft, often against the tides of fashion and recurring bouts of self-doubt.

Author Paul O Jenkins makes this case well, delving into "every album, every song". He's well placed to do so, being highly regarded within the McTell fan community. His tome steers just the right side of academic study and comes with an honest and insightful foreword from McTell himself. Despite being a fan, Jenkins is detached enough to honestly point out weaker songs while also getting to the heart of what he considers McTell's best work. Social justice, father/son relationships, and love both fleeting and eternal are themes which crop up throughout McTell's catalogue.

Those looking to venture beyond 'Streets Of London' for the first time might want to start with early baroque-pop outings *Spiral Staircase* and *My Side Of Your Window*, or the early '70s realism of *Not Till Tomorrow*. There are plenty later career gems too, including revisits to the folk-blues inspirations of his youth. Drawing from several first-person interviews, it's a book full of insight and revelations.

Duncan Fletcher

TEENAGE WASTELAND: THE WHO AT WINTERLAND 1968 AND 1976

Edoardo Genzolini

★★★★★

SCHIFFER PUBLISHING

As an access-all-areas account of The Who's shows at San Francisco's legendary Winterland ballroom in February 1968 and March '76, this book impresses on every level. Innovative in its approach and content this unrivalled study is overflowing with detail, anecdote and background information on everything pertaining to the forementioned shows while also offering an in perspective look at The Who from the late '60s to the mid-70s, a consideration of the significance of San Francisco within the unravelling saga of The Who, the band's relationship with Bay Area impresario Bill Graham and much more besides. However, where this deluxe volume really comes into its own is in the way it combines eyewitness accounts with a wealth of live, backstage and candid photos taken by fans, which lends a tangible extra dimension of authenticity to the project.

While '68 and '76 – as opposed to '67, '69 and '71 – don't immediately jump out as especially significant years in The Who's expansive gigography, the importance of the Winterland shows lies in what they came to represent, what they anticipated and what they ultimately bookended as landmarks in the trajectory of The Who's track record as a formidable live act.

This exceptional book is destined to be on the required reading list for both Who historians and obsessives, and indeed anyone with an interest in the evolution and the behind the scenes workings of the golden age of the hallowed Bay Area music scene.

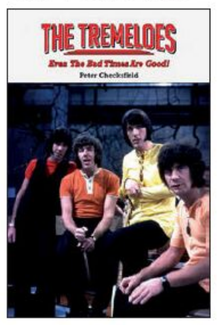
Grahame Bent

THE TREMELOES: EVEN THE BAD TIMES ARE GOOD

Peter Checksfield

★★★★

SELF-PUBLISHED



Once frowned upon by connoisseurs of '60s pop and wilfully ignored by crate-diggers, The Tremeloes – much like contemporaries The Hollies, Marmalade and Honeybus – have seen their reputation re-assessed during the past couple of decades, as less blinkered collectors and collectors join the fray. Yes, they'll always be the four cocky Essex Herberts grinning their way through that uneven run of hits (14 to be precise) but their spirit of adventure shone on B-sides and 1970's career-best album *Master*.

Checksfield has pretty much finessed the Wiki approach to bookmaking, stitching together easily available information into well-researched, entertaining guidebooks about all manner of vintage pop ephemera. His deep dive into the music and history of the Trems benefits from exclusive interviews with surviving members and occasional accomplices, and is overflowing with photos (some previously unseen) and reproductions of international record sleeves.

Equal analysis is given to the Brian Poole years, the glory years and the post-hits wilderness of the mid-70s and beyond, during which time the Trems continued touring and releasing singles in Europe while members came and went. Solo anomalies, spin-offs and long-forgotten writing projects are covered in depth – you've gotta hand it to Checksfield that he can find nice things to say about Rick Westwood's execrable '72 outing 'Hello Sailor' and 2010's tour-only album *The Ones That Got Away*. You'll be hard pressed to find any aspect of the Trems' 60-plus-year career that isn't here.

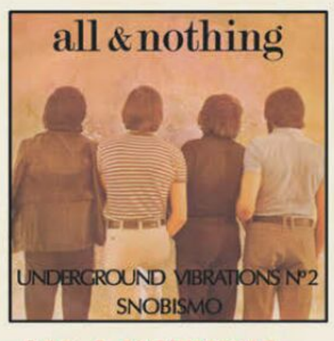
Andy Morten

LIVE REVIEWS RETURN NEXT ISSUE

VARIOUS ARTISTS "Blow My Mind"
An essential purchase for the dedicated garage head available on vinyl for the first time. It collects together the best of the quirkier imprints from Hollywood's heyday in the mid-1960s (the record labels Doré, Era & Mira) in a power-packed set comprising many outstanding garage and proto-psych 45s that today are sought-after collectors' items. 2LP

NIKKI & THE CORVETTES "S/T"
A power-pop gem recorded at a time when this kind of girl group pairing with punk rock was unusual. This is one of the most iconic albums released on Bomp! Records. It includes bonus tracks. LP

SHELLY & NUEVA GENERACIÓN "S/T"
Shelly & NG was a cult Spanish soul & garage band that left an indelible mark on the late 1960s music scene. This collection encapsulates the entirety of their known discography plus previously unreleased recordings. LP



ALL & NOTHING "Underground..."
All & Nothing is one of the icons of Spanish underground rock of the 70s. The overwhelming organ, the firing wah-wah and fuzz guitars explain the high interest on this 45, a must in the top DJs record boxes. 7"

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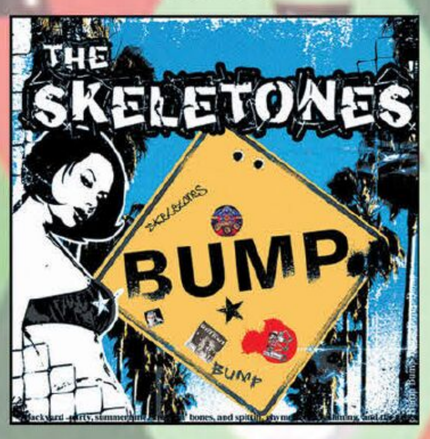
NER - 006

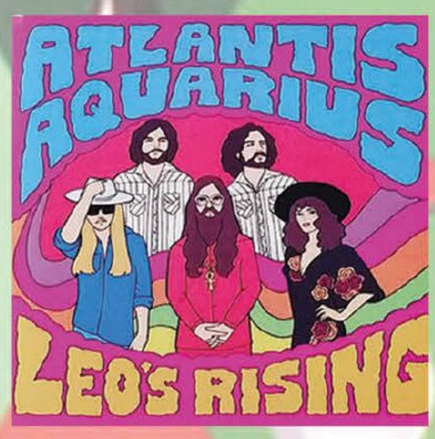
Atlantis Aquarius
Nibirian Sun
NER - 007



The Skeletones
BUMP
NER - 008

Dream Phases
Clear Skies // Maybe Tomorrow
NER - 009

Imaad Wasif
Great Eastern Sun
NER - 010



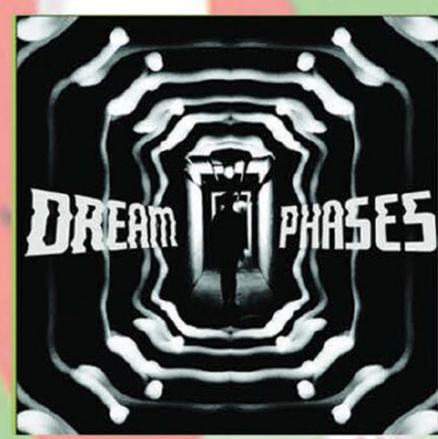
Atlantis Aquarius
Leo's Rising
NER - 016

Timothy Eerie
Ritual
NER - 017 / PER - 012

Paul Jacobs
Easy
NER - 018

Jeffertitti's Nile
The Entire Universe
NER - 019

Zig-Zags
10-12-18 rarities, b-sides and more
NER - 020

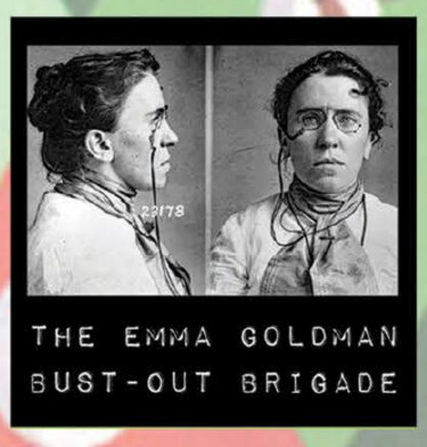


Dream Phases
So Long, Yesterday
NER - 022 / LNR-15

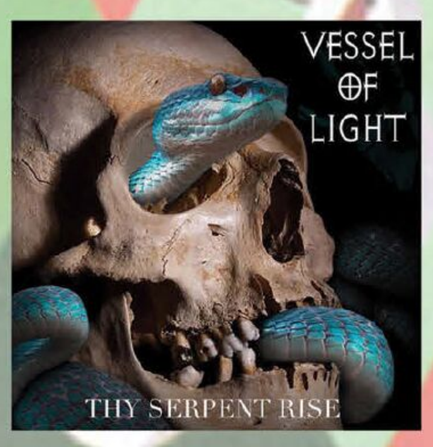
Black Moon Tape
Hello Ghost
NER - 023

The Blank Tapes
Look Into The Light
NER - 025

Savants
New Junk City
NER - 026

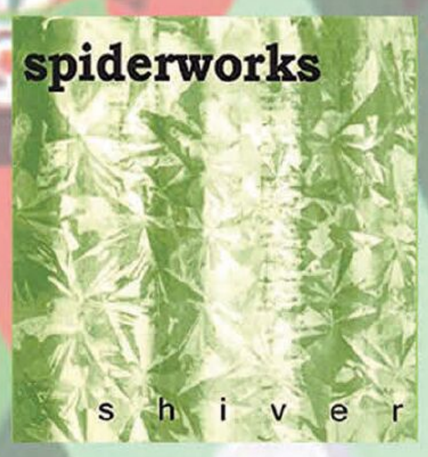


The Emma Goldman
Bust-Out Brigade
NER - 028



Vessel Of Light
Thy Serpent Rise
NER - 033

Vessel Of Light
Last Ride
NER - 034



Spiderworks
Shiver
NER - 035

Livingmore
Take Me LP/CD/CS
NER - 038

Cassius King
Field Trip
NER - 046

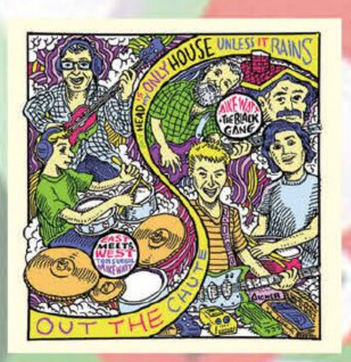
Dream Phases
New Distractions
NER - 048

The Potions
Fun Babies
NER - 011

Young Creatures
Something I Don't Know
NER - 012

Livingmore
It's All Happening
NER - 013

Mike Watt & The Secondmen / Zig-Zags
L.A. to Pedro
NER - 021



The Black Gang / East Meets West
My Head Is My Only House
NER - 030

Christian Bland & The Revelators
Getting With You
NER - 036

mssv
The Scott Aicher EP
NER - 046

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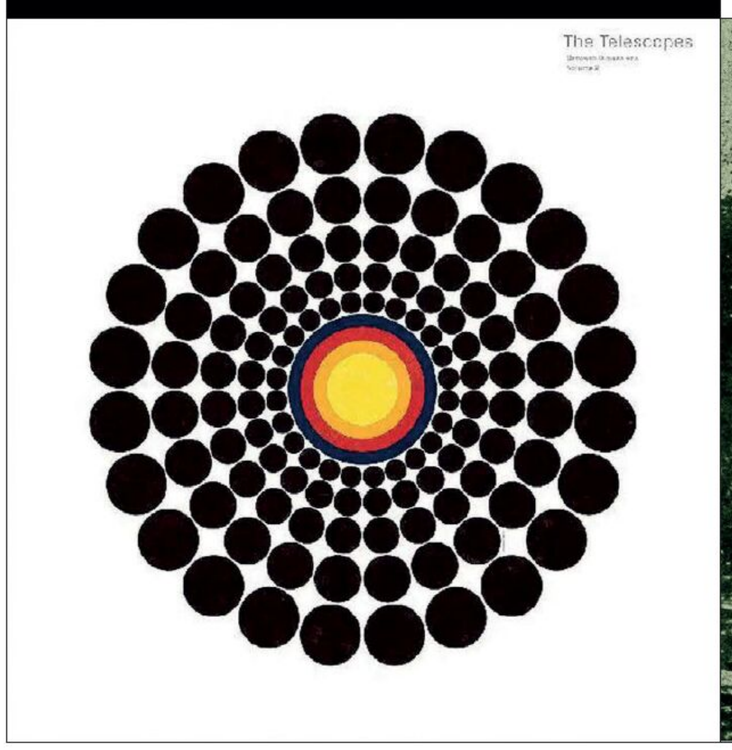

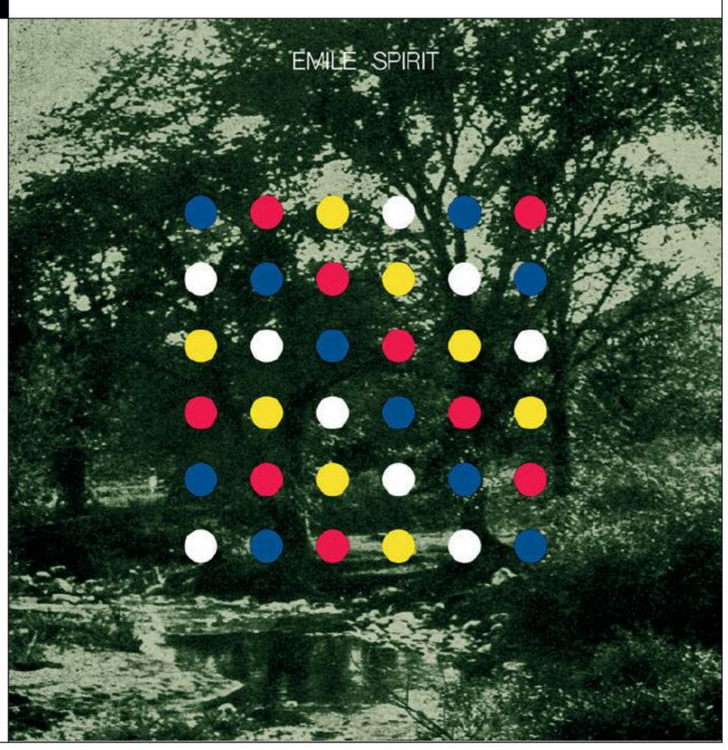

Kanaan

Downpour

JANSEN, NORWAY 2023

Emile

Spirit

HEAVY PSYCH SOUNDS, ITALY, 2023

The Telescopes

Between Dimensions Volumes 1 & 2

ALIVE, US, 2020

DESIGN: ROBIN GNISTA

CHRISTOPHER BUDD catches up with modern-day psych master and music connoisseur **ROBIN GNISTA**

Stockholm's Robin Gnista has been creating album covers and posters for over a decade now, beginning back in 2011 with artwork for his own projects Le Bonheur and Red Strike. His early work is organic, full of sinuous Art Nouveau curves, collage effects, and west coast-esque swirling typography – much of which is still in evidence in recent poster designs for the likes of Ty Segall & White Fence and Melody's Echo Chamber. So it comes as something of a surprise when the artist picks a modernist, pop-art-inspired quartet of mostly new covers to represent him in this column.

"Change has been a very natural part of it since the beginning," explains the affably laidback Robin. "So if you compare year one to year two to year three, there's going to be relatively big shifts along the way... but I think the main thing is that you can't stay in the same thing for one particular time for too long. It's like a farmer or something – the earth, you need to shift it, otherwise it dies, you know?" He laughs at his own metaphor. "You need to do different crops different years. And then you can go back to barley or whatever!

"I'm self-taught, but I have a background with parents who are artists," explains Robin. "I probably thought that I would be a musician at one point, but for one reason or another, this is what I like to do the most." And to hear him tell it, Robin's journey from aspiring musician to successful commercial designer was as simple as could be. "At first it's you and your mates and your band, and then you become acquainted with people who run clubs. And then there's other bands from other places and record company people... and after a while, I started feeling that it was more fun to do the art thing than to be a guitarist on the stage. The inevitable thing is that if you do graphic stuff, you end up doing it in the context where you're creative anyway. So if you have a gig somewhere, *you'll* be the one who makes the poster or the album cover.

"To me it's about communication," he continues. "That's a fancy word, but it's pretty accurate too, because it's about reaching people that you're like-minded with perhaps, or people that you like. When I do something and people buy a record, and I notice they love the cover and they think something about it, and it transforms the way perhaps the album is perceived too, there's a real thing happening there between people. There's nothing theoretical about it, really. It's a great art form. And people can afford to buy it, so they have pieces of art at home!"

The way Robin develops his relationships with his clients reflects this particularly clear-eyed take on creativity. "The quality of my work pretty much relies on a certain level – a big level – of artistic freedom. So essentially, if I've got a client who I feel is trying to push me too much in some direction, I kind of let those things go because, first off, it's not fun. And perhaps connected to that – I'm pretty sure – but they never end up being the things that a journalist two years later goes back asking for! People don't care about those. If it's not a naturally inspired thing, it shows you can't fake it, really.

"And then I usually zoom in to kind of get my vibe on 'What is this album? What is the character of the artists?' Or in some cases, do I think that this artist's image needs some help? So I'm going to push them in this direction to make them look cooler, because that's also a part of the job.

"Not everybody is a veteran musician who's worked with 20 designers and made 20 album covers," Robin points out. "A lot of people – understandably – don't really know how you do it." So is each piece of work

"I don't like things *because* they're old. I think there's a huge distinction. It's about the quality of something that happens to be old and is good"

essentially a calling card for Robin? "Yeah, absolutely. Which is why I'm really reluctant to agree to do something I don't like, because I know that six months later, someone is gonna come calling and ask me to do that again. So it's best to try to move forward or just move in the direction you like all the time. And of course, I've got rent to pay too," he laughs. "There are projects that go through that are not ideal, but, you know, that's same for everybody."

And when it comes to his own inspirations? "It's usually old stuff," Robin smiles, before clarifying, "I don't like things *because* they're old. I think there's a huge distinction. It's about the quality of something that happens to be old and is good – what about it is so good and why? Why *The White Album* still seems pretty current 60 years after the fact. It's a great way of being able to pick out what the qualities are and what things will just become junk in time, what things are the type of qualities to strive for that that lost.

"But at the same time, when it comes to contemporary stuff, I cherry pick a lot of things. More often than not with modern stuff, there is brilliant stuff which comes regularly, but there's rarely someone who's behind a hundred brilliant things. I think it's kind of the same thing with musicians at the moment too. There's a lot of good – or great even – music, but there isn't really a McCartney or Bowie type – people who just do 10 albums in a row which are brilliant. Creativity is different today somehow in the music business, and that's fine. With new stuff, it's very mixed. But when it comes to people I would name as being very special or influential, it's usually '60s and '70s stuff. But I would say that if anything was sources of inspiration and guidance, in reality, it's musicians – it's bands.

"We could talk about Yves Klein as much as you like," he laughs. "I love Yves Klein, but if you're talking about a much stronger influence then we can talk about The Beatles or Bob Dylan, that's the main inspiration.

"Quality is forever. So you can kind of know if old things are perfect because they stand the test of time or they don't, they disappear. And then you can put that together with new stuff that at face value seems to be brilliant. And sometimes they are, and sometimes they're not. So it's a guide more than anything else".

What's next for Robin? "It's the same as usual, I guess," he says with a broad smile. "Keep evolving and exploring the things that are interesting at the moment. And usually, you go into a certain direction and you kind of find what's in there, and you move to another direction when you're done with that – you move back and forth. But there's not really a plan like that, you know, I just do it, and I love to do it!" S!

A large selection of Robin's work can be seen at robingnista.com

Prize Crossword

by Stuart Draper

MELLOW CANDLE's 1972 Deram outing ***SWADDLING SONGS*** is rightly regarded as a high watermark of the progressive folk era. The new gatefold vinyl repro sounds and looks superb. And we have a copy to give away.

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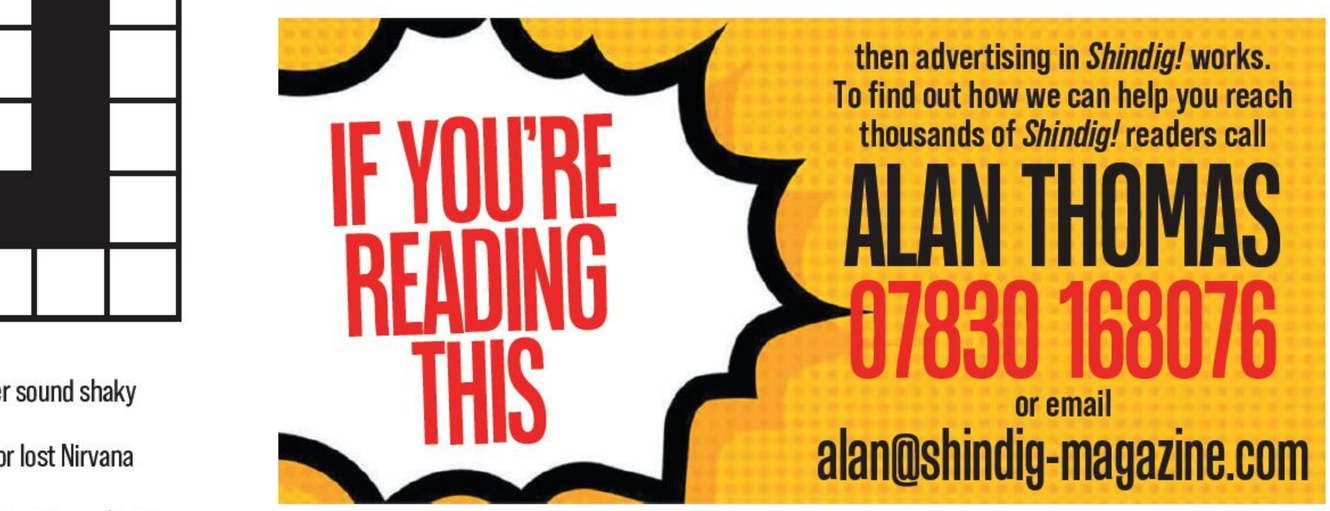

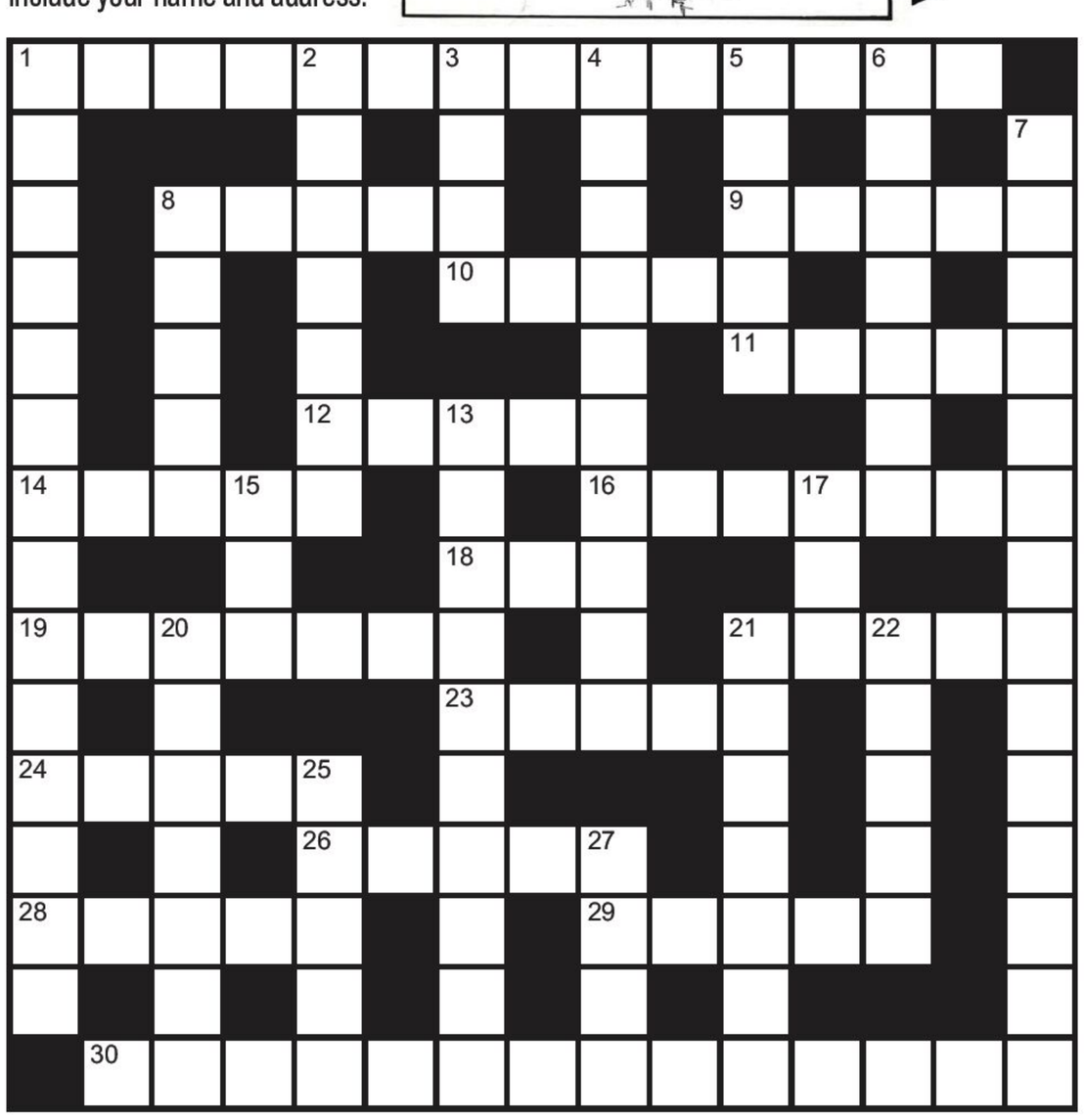

Across

1 Monterey Festival opens to a site in chaos in chaos (3,11)
8 Parks transport pursues song, his legacy cleared at heart (5)
9 Department in krautrock band provides hippie jacket for Indian PM (5)
10 Sure start ends with much worry on an Easybeats Aussi chart topper (5)
11 See 18
12 Miro Denck declares victory in the Cleveland area (5)
14 Stamped out by Iron Butterfly with odd aside (5)
16 Fairfield reception is one keystroke from freerunning (7)
18/11 Soho club could be held a bit responsible for The Beatles' first trip (3,2,3)
19 Grand opening yet a sort of simple conclusion sees Freedom trying to get in front of you (7)
21 I do it badly ahead of Van Duren's optimism (5)
23 Emma Tricca's republic sheds alcohol container (5)
24 Textile loses double time after drama of Nico's fifth (5)
26 Beetroot soup has no right to cover Sun Ra and Pearls Before Swine, or to finish Scott Walker's last (5)
28 I can't begin with The Hollies being made redundant (3,2)
29 In part, we'll enjoy her addition to The Free Design (5)
30 He'd go shimmying wildly to help the poor (2,4,4,4)

Down

1 Arc partner and Big Star founder sound shaky making Dungeness folk (9,5)
2 Sects add religious education for lost Nirvana album (7)
3 Honestly, what's inside gives Supergrass strange climax (4)
4 Acid Reign requires rotten replica use (6,4)
5 Brit been removed from a Tintern Abbey single – further arrangements are needed (5)
6 With a plot he'll only notice somewhat, Jack Good's *Catch My Soul* had this Shakespearian inspiration (7)
7 Rupture follows slight misunderstanding, Helsinki residents drop name as Be-Bop Deluxe record (8,6)
8 Fish eggs play with credit card maybe, but you don't mess around with Jim (5)
13 Just in case you're missing something, Duffy conclude it's entered in a mess (10)
15 Weller wants some acclaim before his high (3)
17 Along with Del Shannon, he's in reverse (3)
20 An aperitif is Taylor's cut, yet still too long for The Creation (2,1,4)
21 Engineered electricians aren't abandoned by Badfinger's ballad for frozen phenomena (7)
22 Gong relinquish ingrowing as Bob and Mary are Sundazed (5)
25 Cartel quit composed celebration for Ivory Coast label – their eponymous band waited 40 years for a Western release (5)
27 Jake Holmes finishes high school with erotic content (4)

Name

Address

Phone **Email**

Issue 147 crossword solution

1 P			2 U		3 M		4 M		5 F		6 S			7 W
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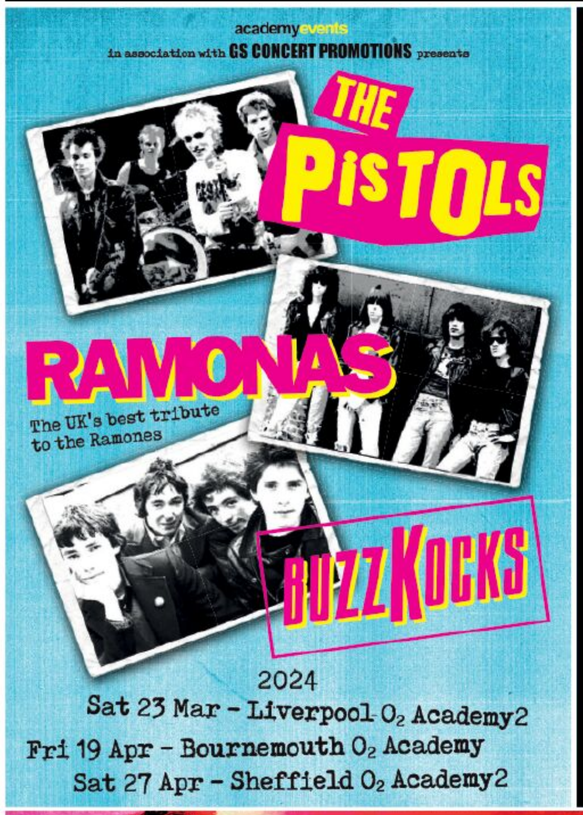
O2 RITZ
FRI 08 MARCH 2024
BIRMINGHAM
O2 INSTITUTE
SAT 09 MARCH 2024
LEEDS
O2 ACADEMY
FRI 15 MARCH 2024
LONDON
O2 FORUM KENTISH TOWN
SAT 16 MARCH 2024
LIVERPOOL
MOUNTFORD HALL
CASTBAND.CO.UK

academyevents
by arrangement with CIRCLE SKY presents
UK TOUR 2024
LOVE
WITH
JOHNNY ECHOLS
PERFORMING DEEP CUTS
AND HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ALBUMS
LOVE, DA CAPO, FOREVER CHANGES
AND FOUR SAIL
SATURDAY
13th JULY
LIVERPOOL
O2 ACADEMY2
SATURDAY
20th JULY
LONDON
O2 SHEPHERD'S
BUSH EMPIRE
PERFORMING
FOREVER CHANGES
with
THE STOCKHOLM
STRINGS & HORNS

academyevents presents
THE
DOORS
ALIVE
2024
FRI 27 SEP LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY
FRI 04 OCT LONDON O2 ACADEMY ISLINGTON
SAT 05 OCT BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY2
FRI 11 OCT LEICESTER O2 ACADEMY2
FRI 18 OCT SHEFFIELD O2 ACADEMY2
2025
FRI 17 JAN NEWCASTLE O2 CITY HALL

academyevents
by arrangement with STRADA MUSIC presents
LINDISFARNE
JANUARY SONG CLEAR WHITE LIGHT SCARECROW SONG
WINTER SONG NO TIME TO LOSE ROAD TO KINGDOM COME
MEET ME ON THE CORNER FOG ON THE TYNE
LADY ELEANOR RUN FOR HOME CLEAR WHITE LIGHT
WE CAN SWING TOGETHER ALRIGHT ON THE NIGHT
DINGLY DELL ALL FALL DOWN TRAIN IN G MAJOR
2024
Thursday
4th April
LEICESTER
O2 ACADEMY
Sunday
7th April
BOURNEMOUTH
O2 ACADEMY
Sunday
1st September
LONDON
O2 SHEPHERD'S
BUSH EMPIRE
lindisfarne.com

JS PROMOTIONS PRESENTS
HAWKWIND
STORIES FROM TIME
AND SPACE
2024
THU 04 APRIL / MANCHESTER ACADEMY
FRI 05 APRIL / NEWCASTLE O2 CITY HALL
SAT 06 APRIL / EDINBURGH O2 ACADEMY
SUN 07 APRIL / GLASGOW O2 ACADEMY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in association with GS CONCERT PROMOTIONS presents
THE PISTOLS
RAMONAS
The UK's best tribute
to the Ramones
BUZZKOCKS
2024
Sat 23 Mar - Liverpool O2 Academy2
Fri 19 Apr - Bournemouth O2 Academy
Sat 27 Apr - Sheffield O2 Academy2

academyevents & FEELING GLOOMY presents
TheDevout
Depechemode
tribute
2024
Fri 14 Jun Leicester O2 Academy2
Sat 15 Jun Liverpool O2 Academy2
Fri 05 Jul Bournemouth O2 Academy
Fri 12 Jul Bristol O2 Academy
Fri 26 Jul Birmingham O2 Academy3
Sat 31 Aug London O2 Academy Islington
feelinggloomy.com

academyevents
by arrangement with SELECTIVE AGENCY presents
THE NATIONAL TOUR 2024
STAIRS
MARCH
THU 21 MANCHESTER ACADEMY 3
FRI 22 LONDON O2 ACADEMY2 ISLINGTON
SAT 23 BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY3
MON 25 LEEDS OLD WOOLLEN
TUE 26 PRESTON FERRET
FRI 29 NEWCASTLE CLUNY
SAT 30 LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY2

academyevents
by arrangement with NEIL O'BRIEN ENTERTAINMENT presents
GUY CHAMBERS
AND THE LEMON TREES
SATURDAY
10th FEBRUARY 2024
O2 ACADEMY2 ISLINGTON
LONDON
GUYCHAMBERS.CO.UK

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The Phonics
THE UK's No.1 TRIBUTE TO
Stereophonics
A BAND CALLED MALICE
THE DEFINITIVE TRIBUTE TO
The JAM
2024
FRI 02 FEB
OXFORD O2 ACADEMY2
FRI 09 FEB
LEICESTER O2 ACADEMY2
SAT 10 FEB
LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY2
FRI 16 FEB
LONDON
O2 ACADEMY2 ISLINGTON
SAT 17 FEB
BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY2
FRI 02 AUG
BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
SAT 03 AUG
MANCHESTER O2 RITZ
2025
SAT 25 JAN
SHEFFIELD O2 ACADEMY2

academyevents presents
The Smyths
plus special guest
BILLY BLAGG
2024
Sat 06 Apr LEEDS O2 ACADEMY
Sat 25 May BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY2
Sat 19 Oct LEICESTER O2 ACADEMY
Fri 25 Oct SHEFFIELD O2 ACADEMY
Sat 26 Oct LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY
Fri 08 Nov BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
Fri 20 Nov OXFORD O2 ACADEMY2
Sat 30 Nov MANCHESTER O2 RITZ
Sat 21 Dec BOURNEMOUTH O2 ACADEMY
2025
Sat 04 Jan NEWCASTLE O2 CITY HALL
National Tour 2024/5

vinyl clicks

In which **MICHAEL BJÖRN** investigates worthy albums that have somehow eluded reissue, compilation or acclaim

LEA NICHOLSON & STAN ELLISON

God Bless The Unemployed

(Transatlantic, UK 1972)

"I'd rather they hadn't released it at all," says Lea Nicholson emphatically more than 50 years after *God Bless The Unemployed* hit the (nonplussed) public. "I wouldn't want anyone to hear it." But how can an album praised by John Peel with a title track presciently combining climate change with universal basic income be so utterly rejected by its creator?

After debuting with folk album *Horsemusic* in 1971, concertina player Lea Nicholson wanted to do something more ambitious together with guitarist Stan Ellison who had played on some tracks. Producer Bill Leader put him in touch with Nat Joseph at Transatlantic, who eventually signed them. Various producers were proposed, and Lea settled for Sam Charters due to his work with Country Joe & The Fish. Although Sam wanted to use Sound Techniques in Chelsea, Lea chose Livingston Studios where he'd made the final *Horsemusic* recordings with engineer Nic Kinsey. "To say the chemistry was poisonous from the start would be an understatement," explains Lea. "The engineers would be in one pub having lunch, Sam Charters would be in another pub, and Stan and I would be in another pub."

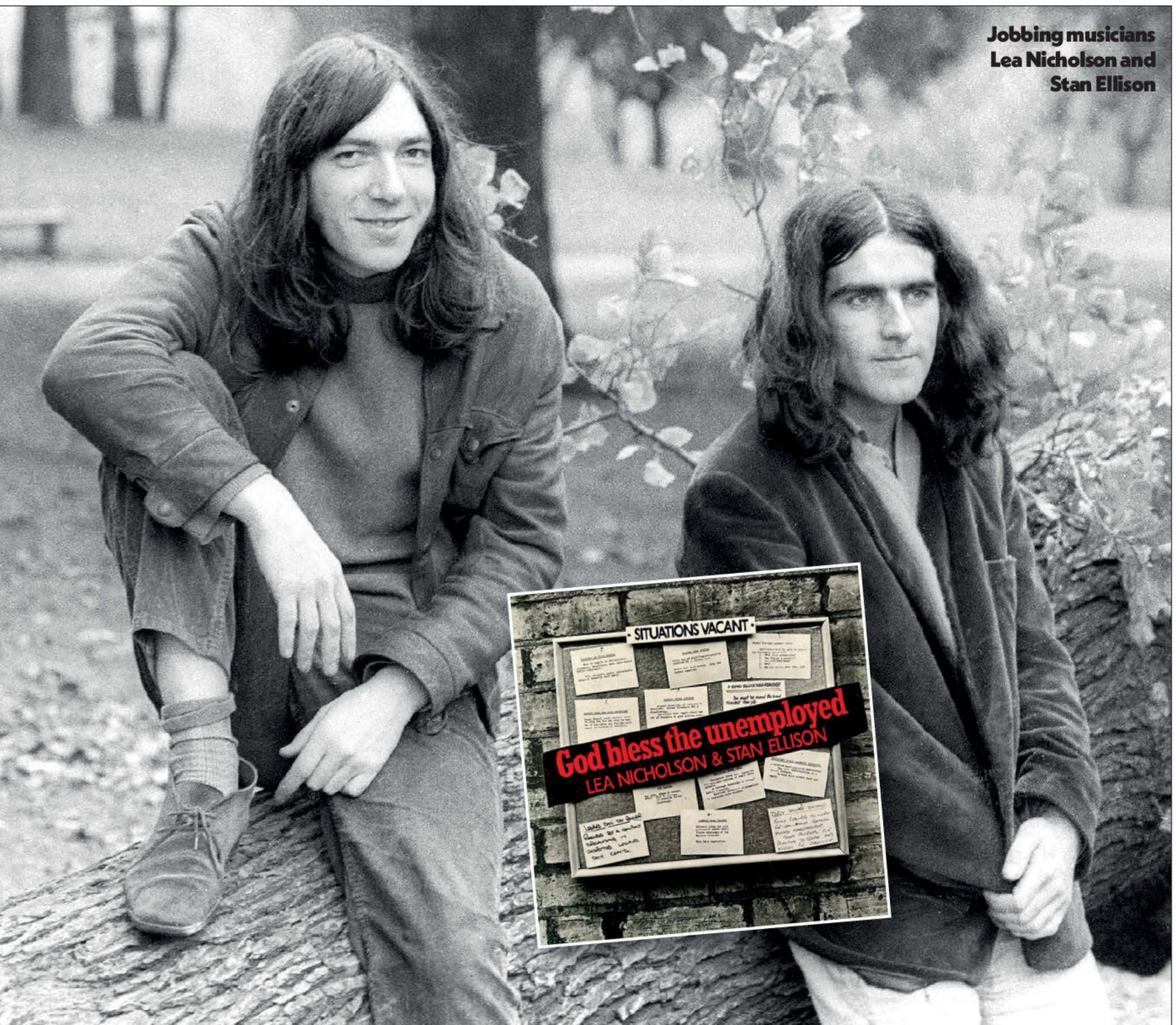
Towards the end of the week, Nic took Lea to one side. "He said, 'Sam Charters is an absolute fucking arsehole,'" exclaims Lea. Nic also said they were recording a track thematically sounding like Elton John, and played that track to prove his point. "I was just flattened by this," says Lea. "I told Sam what Kinsey said to me. He quite naturally and probably quite rightly exploded."

The remaining sessions were aborted and bookings were made for Sound Techniques a few weeks later, with Kinsey now booted. "By this time, Stan and I had lost interest in the situation." When it came to mixing, Sam gave them £5 to buy a bottle of whiskey, drink it and not come back until the mixing was done. "I looked at Stan and we thought, 'Yep, that's a pretty good deal,'" says Lea.

Lea and Stan had already parted when the album was released. But although Lea hated the incoherent production values, he still liked the material, and got back together with Nic Kinsey to re-record opening track 'Lazy Afternoon' as a single for Virgin Records. They discussed re-recording the whole album, but this never happened.

"It's an album of demos. And from that album of demos emerged the single," concludes Lea. "The whole of the rest of it should have been with those production values."

Despite the scuzzy production, there is however no denying the outstanding quality of the songwriting. "This album seems to appeal to a certain type of music journalist," says Lea in defence when confronted with the scent of superlatives. But this writer wants the reader to listen and make up their own mind



Jobbing musicians Lea Nicholson and Stan Ellison

get a **buz**

Sixty Years Of Powerpop

JON 'MOJO' MILLS runs through the latest powerpop playlist for 2024

Uni Boys in 2023, just one of the 60 acts included on the playlist

Many of you have enjoyed our monthly playlists so much that you will probably have now subscribed to Qobuz in order not to miss out. Each one varies from 30-60 tracks, with accompanying essays. Essentially, these serve as compilation albums. And good ones. Due to not having to license anything for our current epic powerpop playlist, we even include The Beatles and The Who, alongside far lesser-known deep cuts for your listening pleasure.

Compiling collections this way is something that would be impossible for an independent label reliant on the licensable catalogue they have. We however can curate something truly special.

Considering that 2024 marks 60 years since The Beatles' and Searchers' jangling guitars opened up the doorway for a stylistic that would continue to endure, develop and not let up, this playlist features 60 tracks culled from 1964-2024. Following on from the Mersey sounds, we take in the mod-pop of The Who and soundalikes (Pete Townsend coined the term in 1967 after all), and the backward looking '70s sounds of Badfinger, The Raspberries, Big Star, Dwight Twilley and Pezband. There are the spikier moods of the late '70s and '80s with The Nerves, The Knack and The Jam, through to the Fabs vibes of Bram Tchaikovsky and The Las. The '90s is then covered with Jellyfish, Teenage Fanclub and Velvet Crush leading the way to The Shazam, Cotton Mather, Cherry Twister and The Flashing Lights. Finally, brand new sounds courtesy of Brendan Benson, The Lemon Twigs and Billy Tibbals close the list.

By the time you're reading this, our latest playlist focusing on mod-beat and mod-rock circa 1965-72 will be live too. All playlists are available on Qobuz via our website. Why not take out a free trial today to sample our wares?

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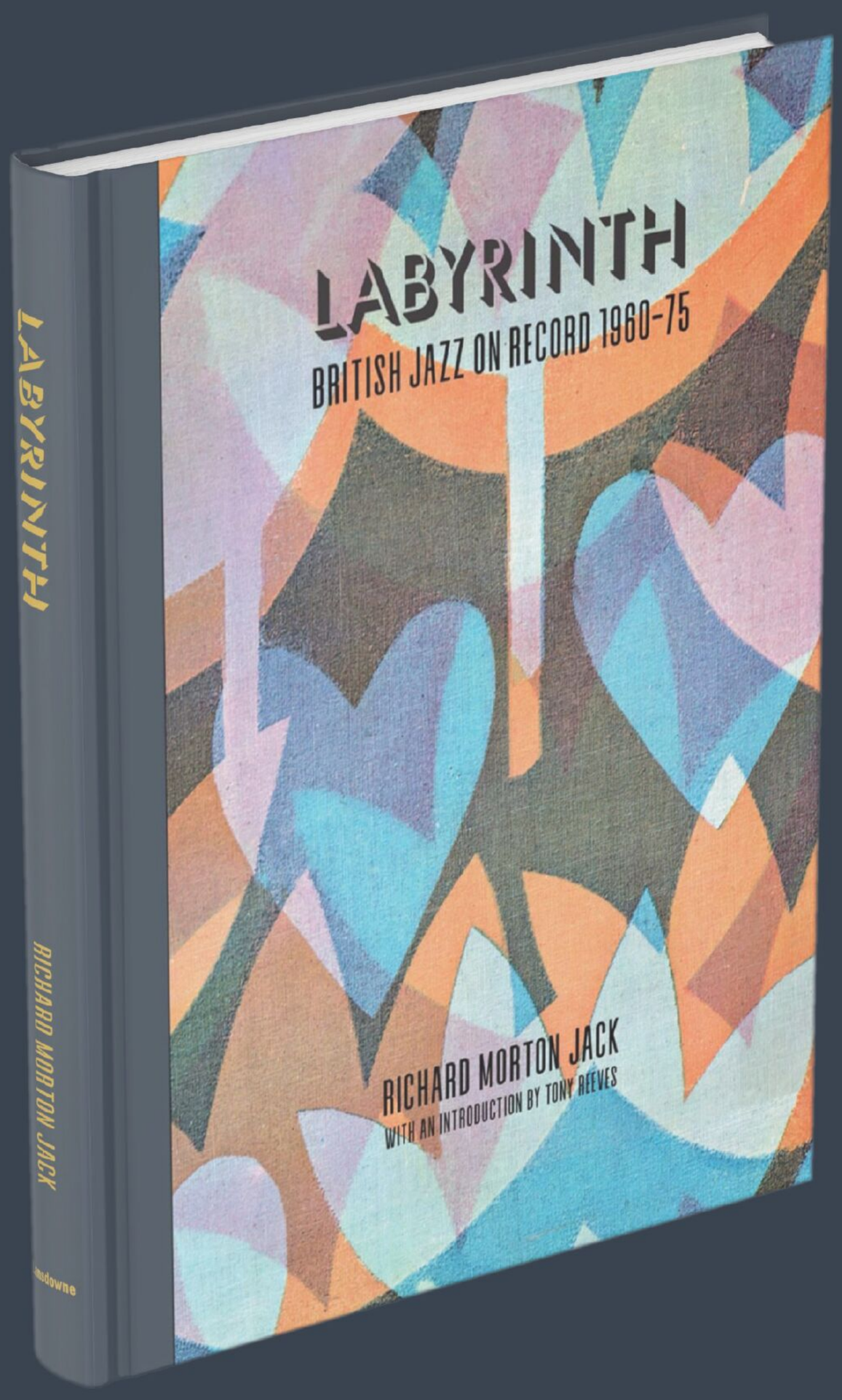
From the author of *Nick Drake: The Life* (*Shindig!*'s #1 book of the year 2023)...

LABYRINTH

BRITISH JAZZ ON RECORD 1960–75



'Utterly engrossing... Featuring large sleeve reproductions (both front and back), period reviews, historical overviews and vintage music press ads, *Labyrinth* finally puts this music on the pedestal it rightly deserves' - Jon Newey, editor, *Jazzwise*

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